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A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
NO. 61 FEBRUARY 1989
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# CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM



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# LED STORM
***The hottest action from US Gold!***

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CRASH
ZX SPECTRUM

I've done even better than getting a new pen this month, I've actually got a proper font. (They say you won't be able to read this either, though!) Just a quick note about cover-cassettes. We'll only be putting cassettes on the cover when we find two (or more) games suitable enough for cover-mounting – we won't just stick stuff on the cover just for the sake of it.

This month's issue sees a very violent character taking ahold of Samara's quill and doing unmentionable things with it (p.25); an innovative new telephone information service (p.22), and a great feature on computer films (p.50). Not too many great games this month; with only LED Storm, Skateball and Blackbeard definite buys. Talking of Blackbeard, reminds me of the new budget review section and a new award (p.66).

Next month we start an informative feature on software houses. In the coming months we've got loads more features (and lots of surprises). So why not take a subscription out now (p.82). Right, that's enough promotion, on with the real writing...

Dom Handy

# CONTENTS

## PULL-OUT OLIPOSTER

**As we enter the New Year, CRASH brings you your very own Oliposter. Hopefully we'll be getting Oli 'master of the airbrush' Frey to continue the trend throughout the year. Watch out for more from this great artist!**

## PUZZLING FILM YEAR

**Over the past year CRASH has reviewed almost three hundred new games. From the disappointment of *Zolyx* to the playable surprise of Ocean's *Firefly*. One CRASH reader has spent the past month compiling the complete review index of the year. All the info on all the games released over the past year.**


**Computers have always been fair game for film producers. We look at the film phenomenon of electronic enhancement. From the breathtaking effects of *2001: A Space Odyssey* to the startling computer characters of *Tron*. Computers can make great stars! (Computer controlled machines – cyborgs etc – soon!)**


**One of the most popular sections of the amazing Christmas CRASH was the 16-page puzzle spectacular. Oli Frey spent the whole of Christmas trying to puzzle out that terrific wordsearch. This month we bring you the definitive answers to solve all those Christmas conundrums. Don't waste a moment, all is revealed.**




## REGULARS



## DO IT YOURSELF



**ISSUE 62**
**MARCH ISSUE ON SALE FEBRUARY 23**

# REVIEWS

## NEW YEAR SPECIALS SMASHED!





## HOT SHOTS 80% and over . . .

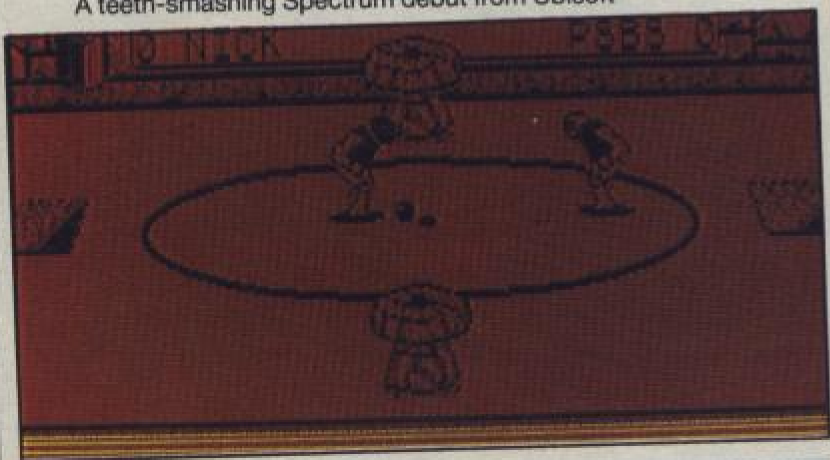










## FULL INDEX




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**COMPETITION RULES The Editor's decision is final in all matters relating to adjudication and while we offer prizes in good faith, believing them to be available, if something untoward happens (like a game that has been offered as a prize being scrapped) we reserve the right to substitute prizes of comparable value. We'll do our very best to despatch prizes as soon as possible after the published closing date. Winners names will appear in a later issue of CRASH. No correspondence can be entered into regarding the competitions (unless we've written to you stating that you have won a prize and it doesn't turn up, in which case drop The Sticky Solutions Department a line at the PO Box 10 address). No person who has any relationship, no matter how remote, to anyone who works for either Newsfield or any of the companies offering prizes, may enter one of our competitions.** No material may be reproduced in part or in whole without the written consent of the copyright-holders. We cannot undertake to return anything sent into CRASH including written and photographic material, hardware or software – unless it is accompanied by a suitably stamped, addressed envelope. Unsolicited written or photographic material is welcome, and if used in the magazine is paid for at our current rates.



NEWSFIELD
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# NEWS

## MOONWALKER STRIKES GOLD

**MEGASTAR Michael Jackson** is set to appear on the Spectrum this autumn thanks to **US Gold**. The game will be based on the pop phenomena's hit ***Moonwalker*** movie, which opened this last Christmas. In the film Jackson is turned into a superhero by a passing shooting star. While critics have lambasted the plot, which includes lengthy clips of his videos, the effects are spectacular with Jackson transforming into a rocket car, a silver robot and even a massive spaceship.

The game will be programmed by US Gold and distributed by them in Britain and Europe (more than likely containing a free audio track too!), while the **Keypunch Corp** will handle sales in America. Keypunch are based in Minneapolis, St Paul, and as well as having several full-priced labels account for 25% of the US budget market. Current successes include *Californian Raisins* (based on a TV ad) and *Psycho*. Keypunch also plan to release *Jaws* and *A Nightmare On Elm Street*. US Gold will be handling the UK distribution of some Keypunch games, including *A Nightmare On Elm Street*.

Another big licence due out from US Gold is *Indiana Jones: The Last Crusade*. US Gold have produced computer game versions of the earlier two films and expect the third to be 'wonderful'. Programming is by **Tiertex**, responsible for *720°* and *Thunder Blade* and also tipped to do *Moonwalker*. *The Last Crusade* is due out in June.



## SAM: CLIVE II

**MGT, THE** leading manufacturer of Spectrum add-ons, has unveiled detailed plans for the production of a £149.95 'Super 8-bit' computer. **Miles Gordon Technology**'s SAM Coupé features 256K RAM, six-channel stereo sound, four screen display modes, a sophisticated custom chip and a Z80B processor which runs 50% faster than the Spectrum's. A £220 version comes with a built-in 780K 3.5" disk drive, but the entry-level machine will load off cassette. There is also a 48K Spectrum emulation mode allowing most Spectrum games to run on it. Expected to be available from April, already the first month's production run has been over-subscribed.

News of the machine was exclusively revealed in Issue 48, with an in-depth report in Issue 50, but it's taken a year to finalize the design. SAM will come complete with a multiplicity of interfaces, including MIDI for musicians, and can easily be expanded to 512K RAM with two extra chips. Owners of MGT's Plus D and DISCiPLE Spectrum disk drive add-on will also be pleased to know they're SAM compatible. For more details on this exciting machine turn to page 54.

## DISHY NEW SPECTRUM IN SEX SCANDAL

**THE NEW** version of the Spectrum +2, the +2A, has run into criticism due to its incompatibility with some peripherals. This is because it has the same circuit board as the +3, which has a slightly different edge connector to the old +2. Critics suggest **Amstrad** have made this alteration to clear stocks of unused +3 boards.

Although the +2A is easily distinguished from the grey +2 by its black colour, it is being sold in identical packaging.

The Spectrum's creator has, of course, moved onto other things. Sir Clive Sinclair's latest product is a low-price satellite TV receiver. The flat, square 'dish', from Sir Clive's **Cambridge Computer** firm, measures just 60cm across. And at a mere £149.95 for the basic receiver and tuner system (£179.95 with remote control; £229.95 with remote control, graphic equaliser and stereo sound), it will be in direct competition with Alan Sugar's similarly-sized (and shaped) Amstrad/Fidelity dish at £199.99 (£259.99 with remote control). We're all backing Sir Clive's!

Both dishes, available in high street stores from March, use the popular PAL format to receive transmissions, including the 16 channels newly available from the recently-launched *Astra* satellite.

Of course one of the main worries with satellite TV is the potential for crude exploitation-type entertainment. Similar concern about standards in computing are being voiced by **OASIS** – the Organisation Against Sexism In Software. It aims to encourage software houses to avoid sexist stereotyping and is producing a bi-monthly journal, offering a forum for further discussion on the subject.

One software house already producing software with 'women in mind' is Audiogenic, which has outlawed sexism and adopted a policy of positive discrimination towards women – surely that's a contradiction in terms.

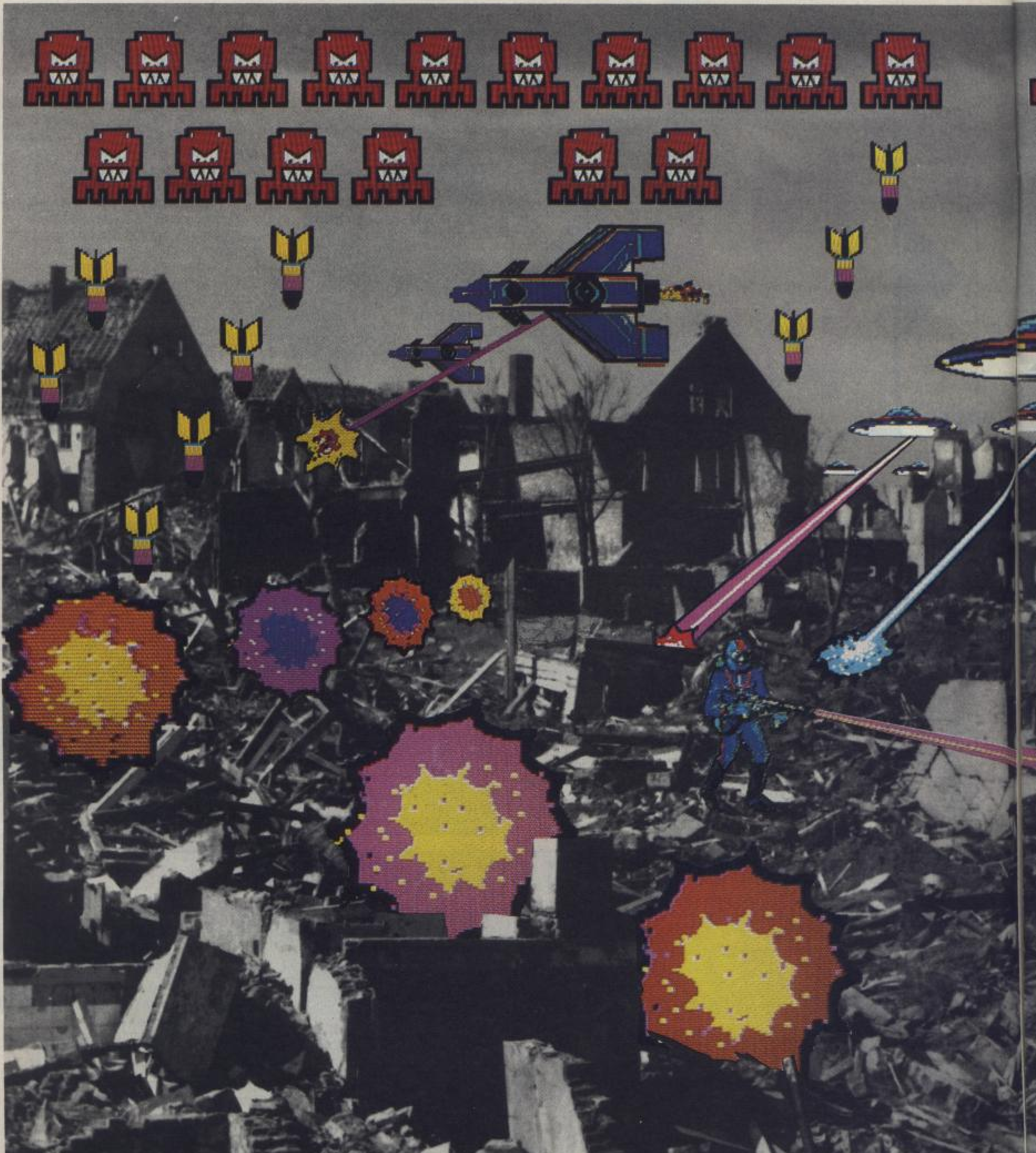
Anyway, we at CRASH welcome the campaign for more women in games, in programming, in promotions, in the CRASH office, and practically anywhere else, for that matter.

Women (and blokes come to that) will pleased to know CRASH has been proved the magazine intelligent readers prefer. In a recent scientific trial, held at **Spitting Image**'s Limehouse Studios, competition winners from all the top computer magazines were entered in a talent contest. Each winner had to perform an imitation of a celebrity of his choice. Needless to say the contestant who had been raised on monthly issues of CRASH magazine won easily. 17-year-old CRASH reader Steven Martin did a scintillating impression of EastEnders' Dot Cotton to win various goodies, including a latex puppet of himself worth several hundred pounds. Congratulations, Steven!

## FOLLOW THAT LICENCE!

**AFTER MANY** months toting the game around software houses, it seems that the ever-cute **Roger Rabbit** has found a home. **Activision** have just finalised plans to release *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, due out in February. The conversion of the Robert Zemeckis (*Back To The Future*) film is to be programmed by Software Studios (*R-Type*). Other interesting releases from Activision include *The Real Ghostbusters* (February), *Time Scanner* (March) and *Incredible Shrinking Sphere*. **Force Field** are programming the last two, with *ISS* reviewed next issue.

**Ocean** are never quiet. Schwarzenegger's *Red Heat* and TV's *Run The Gauntlet* are ready for an Easter release. *Renegade* fans will be glad to hear the third in the series is also planned. Ring the *CRASH Hotline* (page 22) for more up-to-date info.



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● *Driving away the criminal element*

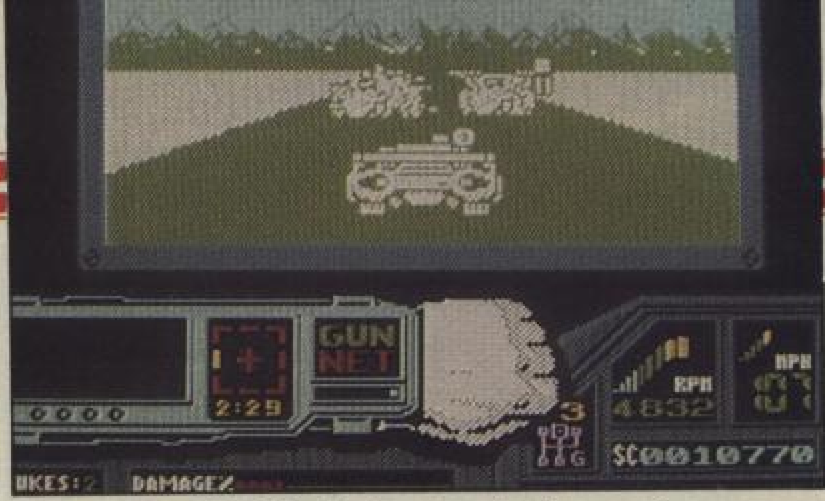
Producer **Gremlin Graphics**
Gas 'n' bullets **£7.99 cass £12.99 disk**
Author **Tony Porter, Gary Priest, Jon Harrison, Kevin Bulmer**

In the future, street crime and WWIII seem indistinguishable.

You begin the game in your Vmax Turbo Interceptor with hordes of DOA cars trying to force you off the road. You respond by blasting them to pieces, but the *real* work begins when you get called to crime scenes. Once you arrive the game switches to a side-on view of you walking through an apartment block. Gunning down criminals earns extra points, but watch out for civilians.

**Overlander crossed with RoboCop and no multiload sounds a promising concept, and the first car stage is certainly very smoothly programmed. But there's a chronic lack of both colour and long-term appeal – later levels neglect even to change the monochromatic colour of buildings. Disappointing.**

**STUART 59%**




▲ With colours like this who wants to play the game?

The driving blast-'em-up section has been done to death recently and *Techno Cop* is one of the weaker, more repetitive versions. The other section is no better, simply being a case of remembering where you found the criminal last time. *Techno Cop* is mildly addictive, at least to start with, but offers little originality to keep you playing for long.

**MARK 51%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** the road scrolls fairly smoothly, but the buildings are dull and monochromatic
**Sound:** a noisy 128K title tune and some quiet in-game engine noises and footsteps
**Options:** definable keys
**General rating:** *Techno Cop* tries to mix two very different genres, but as neither section is very riveting, it fails to hold your attention for very long

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 64% |
| Graphics | 64% |
| Sound | 52% |
| Playability | 58% |
| Addictive qualities | 55% |

**OVERALL 56%**

# FINAL ASSAULT

● *The only way is up*

Producer **Epyx**
How steep **£8.99 cass £12.99 disk**
Author **Choice Software**

Cold? Pah! You call a few snowflakes on New Year's Day bad weather? Well, crawl back into bed with your hot water bottle because you certainly won't like this . . .

*Final Assault* begins by asking you to pack your bags. Along with pitons and ropes you can choose to take a pizza (honest) and various other items. Once kitted out you can choose one of six routes, two of each difficulty level. Climbs consist of both ice and rock faces, as well as crossing dangerous glaciers.

Ice faces are climbed with pickaxes, using a simple combination of up, down and fire. Rock faces require far more skill as all the limbs are controlled individually: the player moves them in turn, trying to find the best holds. Four icons show whether each limb has a firm hold, a weak hold, or none at all.

Once on the glacier you simply walk along, poking at thin bits of ice to test them – it's very easy. In fact the only section where much skill is needed is on the rock face. Graphically, the climber and the mountains are adequately represented. Ultimately this is a mixture of sections which don't quite gel into a complete game – a brave attempt at a sport inherently difficult to implement.

**PHIL 45%**

***Final Assault* is certainly an appropriate name because your first game will doubtlessly be your last. It has no addictive qualities at all, due to monotonous gameplay and pathetic graphics. Admittedly there's an element of strategy in picking your stores, but mostly it's just sticking a pick into the ice and hauling yourself up.**

**NICK 31%**



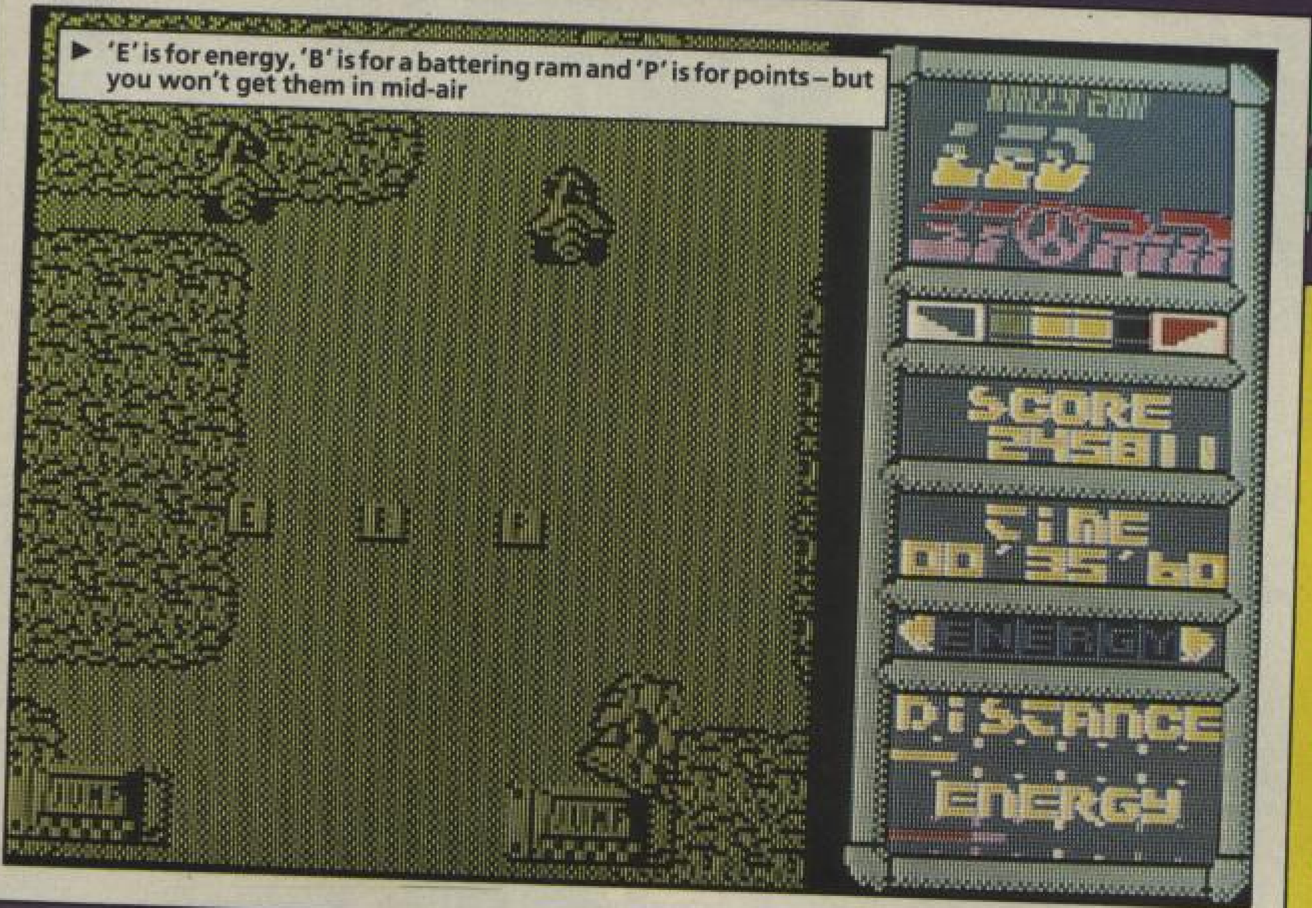

▲ . . . And who wouldn't be 2624 metres up a vertical ice face

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Sinclair
**Graphics:** the climber is fairly well animated, but simple mountain slopes are dull
**Sound:** a catchy little title tune but only a few beeps during play
**Options:** definable keys. Choice of six routes to climb
**General rating:** your money would be better spent on a woolly hat and a pair of wellies!

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 50% |
| Graphics | 38% |
| Sound | 47% |
| Playability | 40% |
| Addictive qualities | 35% |

**OVERALL 38%**



► 'E' is for energy, 'B' is for a battering ram and 'P' is for points – but you won't get them in mid-air

## WEATHERING THE STORM

- In Netwood City, keep to the clear parts of the track to go faster.
- Collect the letter 'B', then ram all the other cars.
- Hit the ramps before gaps at full speed, or you'll fall short of the other side.
- In Coral Sea, if your car is flashing, you can destroy the coral monsters on contact.
- If you get stuck behind some rocks in Netwood City, just jump to get over them.
- Keep a look out for fuel cans: if six are collected, your energy returns to its maximum level.

From the programming team who brought you *Bionic Commando* comes a nine level, rip-roaring, nail-biting racing game. Initially you may, like me, puzzle at the lack of offensive weapons to blast all the unfriendly road hogs. But once you get into the game the sheer thrill of racing down the track, at a vast rate of knots, pushes all thoughts of blowing up motorway monsters from your mind. Besides, who needs poncey machine guns and rocket launchers when you can leap and flatten the dudes. If you think you can stand the pace buy *LED Storm* now!

**MARK 92%**

Producer **GO!/Capcom**
Led in petrol **£8.99 cass**
**£12.99 disk**
Author **Mike Follin, graphics by John Tatlock, music by Timothy Follin (Software Creations)**

In a future time, traffic congestion has got so bad that special 'skyways' have been built. But although they're free from stupid pedestrians, there's more than enough kamikaze drivers (no bears, though) (thank goodness! – Ed) to make life interesting.

Nine vertically-scrolling tracks range from the high flyovers of the Capital City to the uninviting landscape of Ruins Desert. Contact with small cars and other obstacles slows you down and reduces your energy level. Some of the tracks also contain huge gaps which can only be cleared by hitting a ramp at full speed.

Although your turbo-charged car is completely unarmed, it does have one useful trick up its sleeve: it can perform huge upward leaps to avoid other cars, and can even crush them as it lands. But beware the pesky frogs which hang on the back of the car, stopping it from jumping: they must be shaken off by quickly moving left and right.

Each of the nine stages must be completed before your energy level reaches zero. Fortunately, extra energy can be gained by driving through fuel cans and energy tablets. The latter are either static, floating around the track or flying (in which case the car must jump to get them). Small bonus letters may also be collected for extra points and even a battering ram to allow you to destroy other cars on contact.

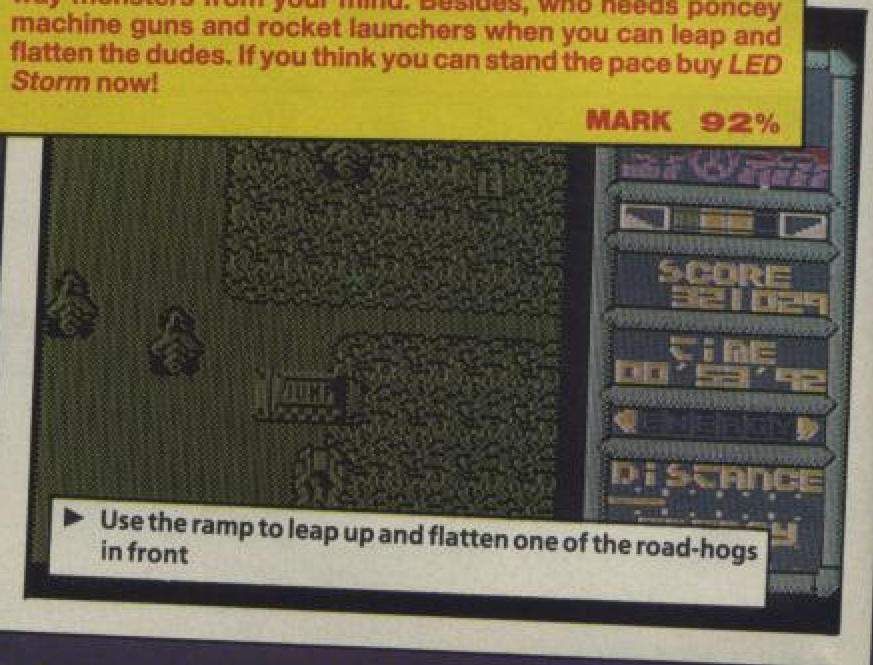
Falling into gaps or fatal car smashes do not, strangely, mean the end of the game. Instead a new car is brought onto the track by a large, hovering spaceship at the cost of much vital energy.

What really makes *LED Storm* so superior to other driving games is its exhilarating speed: it must be one of the fastest games on the Spectrum. The super-fast, and smooth, vertical scrolling is stunning, and the effect of speed is cleverly enhanced by the horizontal marks on the track. Furthermore, the various vehicles are all well-drawn, especially the extra-large juggernauts. One minor flaw is the horizontal movement of the screen which is stepped instead of smoothly scrolling, but it doesn't affect play anyway.

Sound is also used well: brilliant 128K tunes accompany both the title

**NICK** GO!/Capcom have done an excellent job with a detailed scrolling landscape and sprites that, although monochrome, are very effective. You'll need good reflexes to be able to survive even the first level, which makes it extremely addictive. The soundtrack that accompanies the split-second action is excellent with a host of arcade-type effects and a selection of tunes that grip your attention and add atmosphere to the game. The basic idea behind the *LED Storm* is very similar to the classic *Spy Hunter*, but instead of using weapons you can jump over your enemies and shake off passengers. I'm sure that *LED Storm* will be a hit with everyone, and it certainly deserves to be.

**91%**



► Use the ramp to leap up and flatten one of the road-hogs in front

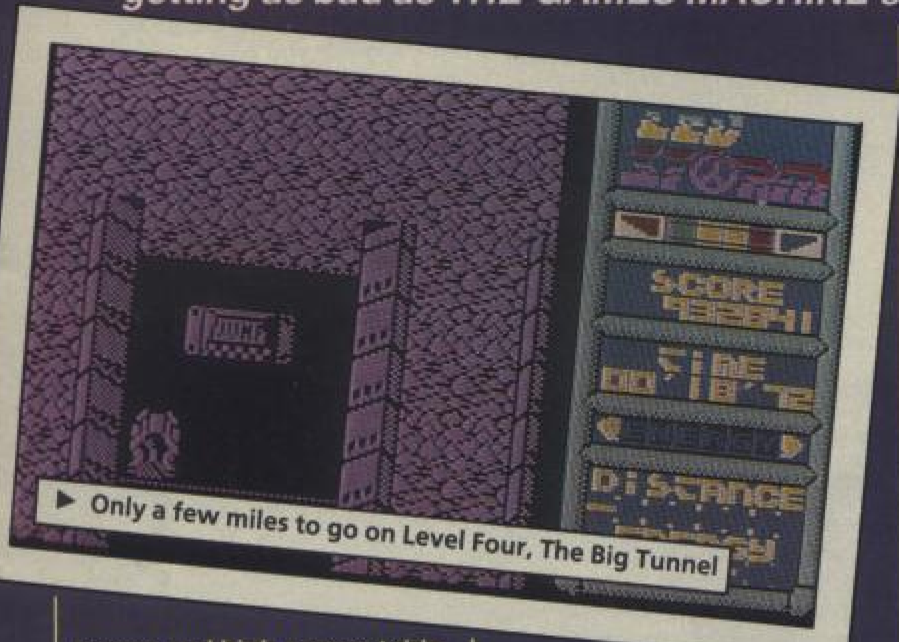


► Just off the starting line and about to crash

A CRASH Smash

# LED STORM

● *Spring showers bring heavy weather (eh? these comments are getting as bad as THE GAMES MACHINE's – Ed)*



▶ Only a few miles to go on Level Four, The Big Tunnel

screen and high scores table, while the furious driving action features a variety of excellent effects. 48K owners aren't too badly off either, although there is a multiload with two levels being loaded at a time.

As a fan of that golden oldie, *Spy Hunter*, when I first set eyes on *LED Storm* my eyes popped out. And playing it proves an even more amazing experience – genuine skill is required to make progress, rather than the repetitive blasting featured in other recent driving games. Excellent game design and superb presentation go together to produce one of the most playable games for a long time.

Even so, I wondered if the simple idea of jumping and zooming along the highway would eventually get boring, but the opposite is true: the more I played, the harder it was to tear myself away from such a compulsive game. If the soon-to-be-released coin-op is anywhere near as enjoyable, it's sure to be the arcade hit of 1989. And just remember, you saw it first on the Spectrum!

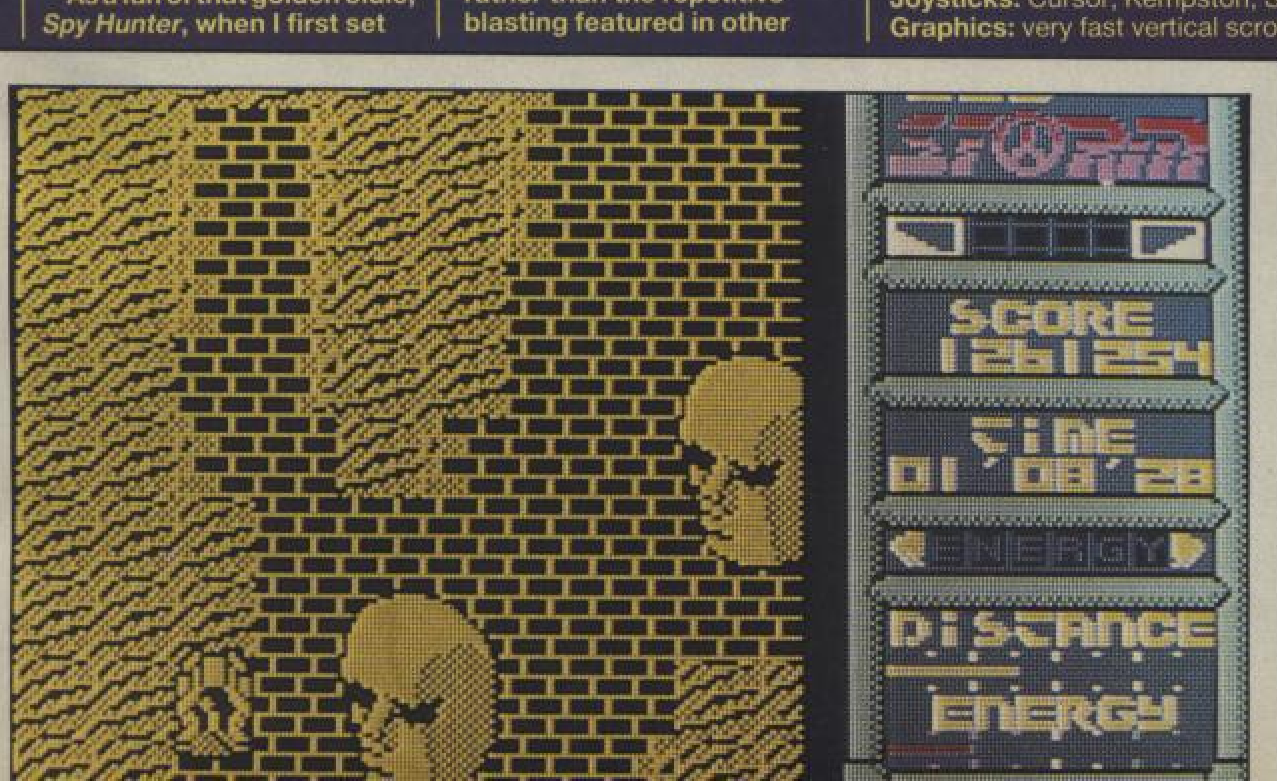
**PHIL 95%**

▶ The hoverscooter brings *another* replacement car on Level Three, Coral Sea




## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** very fast vertical scrolling of the monochromatic track
**Sound:** excellent 128K tunes and neat in-game effects, including a nice metallic 'thump' sound when the car lands
**Options:** definable keys
**General rating:** a beautifully-presented driving game that plays as good as it looks




| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 92% |
| Graphics | 90% |
| Sound | 91% |
| Playability | 93% |
| Addictive qualities | 92% |

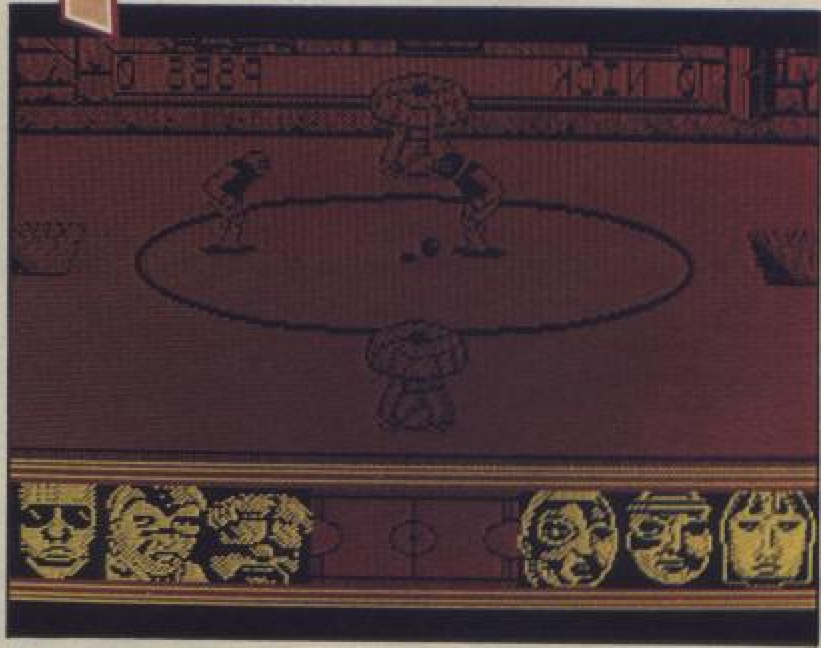
**OVERALL 93%**

# SKATEBALL

● *Wimbledon FC 2020*

Producer **Electronic Arts/Ubi Soft**
Shoulder pads **£8.99 cass £14.99 disk**
Authors **John Medhurst, Roger Taylor, Nigel Kenward**

Imagine Torville and Dean crossed with the movie *Rollerball* and you've got a good picture of the next century's most popular sport. The game has two players per side, a goalie and an attacker, plus two substitutes each. Goals are scored by bouncing the puck past the goalie, and each round lasts until one player has scored five points. Tackling is in the time honoured Wimbledon fashion – anything goes, including flying kicks – and you should also look out for collisions with the wall, which send you flying. As the game progresses obstacles are added: initially just blocks to run around, but later on there's pits, spiked balls and disintegrators – fall foul of these and your man is dead. Lose all your men and the game's over. To avoid these obstacles when your man is offscreen you can use the effective radar scanner.



▲ **Another bloodthirsty scene from** Ubi Soft's ***Rollerball*-style sports game**

There's more to the game than simple violence, however, since each of your players (apart from the goalie) has different characteristics. These include strength, balance, reactions and shooting skills. Choosing the right players at the start of the game is vital for success.

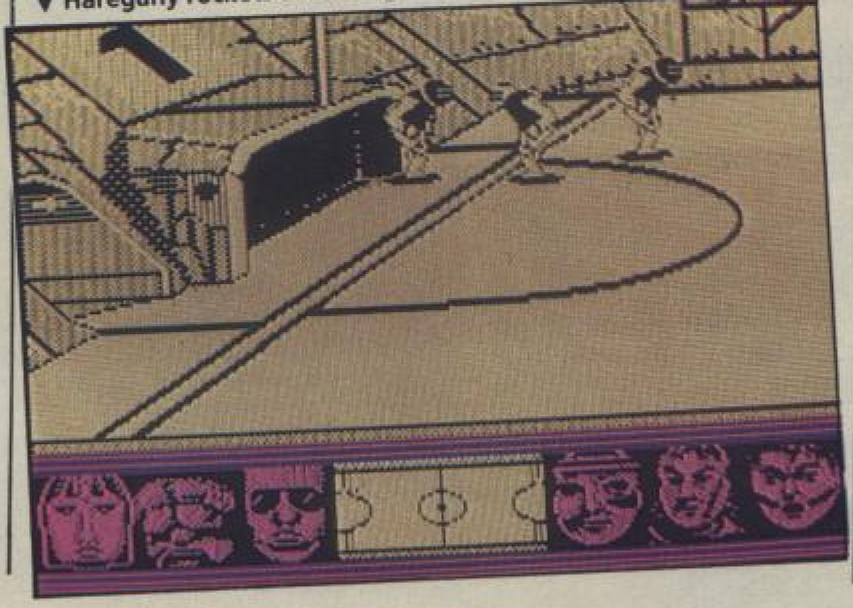
They say that life in the future will be tough, *Skateball* goes some way to showing us just how tough. To start off with the game seems uncomplicated, but the more you play against a friend, the more demanding it becomes. Background graphics are nicely detailed, although moving sprites and sound effects both leave a little to be desired. Nevertheless *Skateball* is a fast, violent and addictive sports game which is well worth considering.

**MARK 80%**

**PHIL This is essentially a futuristic version of ice hockey, but with even more violence. Great satisfaction can be gained from tripping your opponent, especially when he then falls into a pit. It's surprising that there's only one player to control (apart from the goalie), but this avoids control confusion and their different characteristics bring in a strategy element. It also enables a stronger player to be handicapped via weak players. The action in a two-player game is always fast, end-to-end stuff. It's a pity that on higher rounds you can simply kill off all your players, and, if more than three points in the lead, win. A bigger penalty for losing a player would add to the fun, but another flaw – the cumulative goal score is only displayed at the end – compensates since you're never certain of your score unless you carefully note down end of round points. Even so, this is one of the most enjoyable two-player games I've seen for a fair while, although it's not so hot playing against the computer.**

**85%**

▼ **Haregany rockets another goal past the goalie**



## SKATING ON THIN ICE



- On early levels, stronger players tend to do best.
- If the opposing player is stronger, don't tackle him head-on: hit him from the side.
- Walk the ball straight through the goalie for a certain goal.
- When defending your goalmouth try and shoot the puck away – usually it goes straight to the other end.

At first I thought this an overly simple, run-for-the-goal-and-fire game, but after a closer look, my opinion soon changed. Picking a player for shooting skills matters little if a stronger player, or one with faster reactions, keeps bouncing you off the ball. With a stronger player the game becomes fairer – I started winning – and more enjoyable. The first levels are great fun on their own, and when the pits and spikes turn up it becomes both harder and side-splittingly funny!

**STUART 90%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

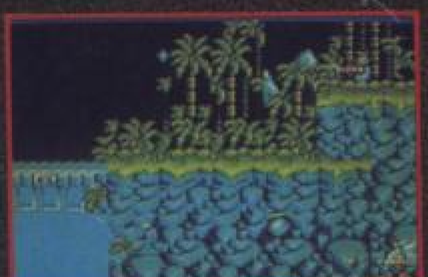
**Joysticks:** Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** adequate, good detailing on background
**Sound:** no tunes, but decent in-game bumping and barging effects
**Options:** One- or two-player games, change the monochromatic background colour, practise one of the nine levels and change team names.
**General rating:** one of the best two-player games around at the moment.

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 76% |
| Graphics | 79% |
| Sound | 55% |
| Playability | 85% |
| Addictive qualities | 86% |

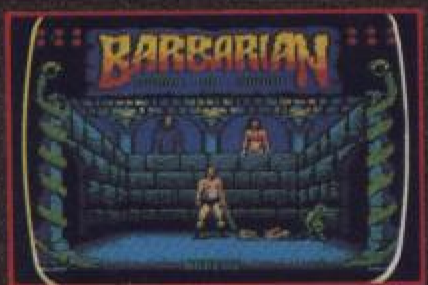
**OVERALL 85%**

# The CRUCIAL COMPILATION



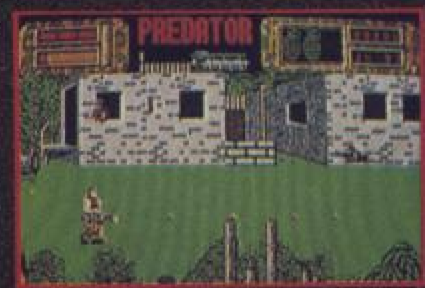
**GRYZOR** Featuring all the game-play of the arcade original. Gryzor takes you into a thrilling alien world of force fields, fanatical guerillas and strange enemy defence systems – but you have the fire-power and maybe, with a 'little' skill, grit and split second timing, you can infiltrate the aliens' headquarters. Play Gryzor once and you'll be hooked!
© 1987 Konami



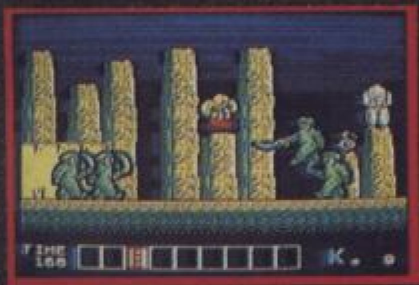

**BARBARIAN** THE STORY SO FAR... The evil sorcerer Drax has agreed that if a champion can be found who is able to defeat his demonic guardians, the Princess Mariana will be released. From the wastelands comes an unknown barbarian, a mighty warrior, wielding his broadsword with deadly skill. Can he vanquish the forces of Darkness? ONLY YOU CAN SAY...
© Palace Software Ltd



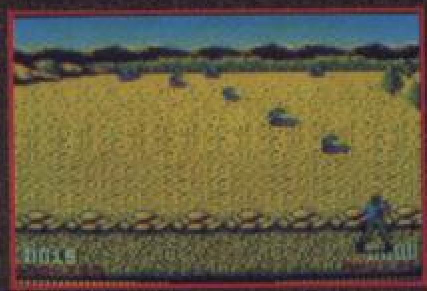
**CRAZY CARS** You are racing in the world's craziest race: "The American Cross Country Prestige Cars Race". If you are able to complete the race before the time runs out, you will get a faster car. You start with a Mercedes 560 SEC, and only the world's best drivers may drive a Ferrari GTO.
PREPARE TO START, READY? GO!!!
© Titus Software Ltd.
LAST NINJA replaces C.CARS on C64




**PREDATOR** You've heard about Predator, the Schwarzenegger movie – now you can play the leading role. Take a crack commando unit into the South American jungle to rescue a bunch of trapped diplomats. Should be easy enough...and so it would be, if it weren't for the mysterious alien who keeps on taking out your men.
© 1987 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp. All rights reserved.



**KARNOV** Join Karnov, the fire-breathing Russian stongman, on his hazardous quest to defeat the evil dragon Ryu and find the Lost Treasure of Babylon. Karnov is a vast 4-way scrolling game that combines both strategy and fast action in nine challenging levels of gameplay. It is recognised by arcade addicts everywhere as one of the best games of its kind. Karnov also has something special in the way of characters – have you ever been killed by a skeleton on an Ostrich?
© Electric Dreams Software Ltd



**COMBAT SCHOOL** Konami's arcade hit now for your home micro and already a No. 1 hit. Seven gruelling events featuring the Assault Course, Firing Range, Arm Wrestling and Combat with the instructor himself! Combat school throws down the challenge to the toughest of thoroughbred gamesters.
© 1987 Konami



**TARGET RENEGADE** Every move you make, every step you take, they're watching you. Fight your way through the precinct – the back alleys, the car parks, fight your way through the villainous community, the skin-heads, the Beastie Boys, the bouncers. This is just the tip of the iceberg on you chilling quest to confront "MR. BIG".



**PLATOON** Lead your Platoon deep into enemy territory, you can almost feel the humidity, sense the threatening dangers as you encounter the enemy and his many booby traps. Having found the underground maze of tunnels, enter at your peril! Enemy soldiers lunge at you from the murky waters within, but this is the only way you can find vital information. If you come out of this alive, you'll be just one of the few!
© 1986 Hemdale Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

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# LAST DUEL

● *Devastating duellist duo*

Producer **Capcom/GO!**
Spare wheels **£8.99 cass £12.99 disk**
Author **Tiertex**

According to the King, Princess Sheeta has been kidnapped by baddies from the evil planet of Mu. While you may suspect she's run off to change her name to something bearable like Ingrid or Beatrice, you've still got to try and rescue her.

Your rescue attempt takes the form of six distinct levels (multiloaded one at a time) of vertically-scrolling blasting. Your vehicle changes after each level, alternating between a Reliant Robin lookalike and a spaceplane. In the simultaneous two-player mode, one player controls the car while the other gets the spaceplane. The main difference between them is the way the car must jump over holes in the play area, whereas the spaceplane just hovers. Extra firepower for both can be gained by collecting floating P symbols. This is useful for the huge alien which must be defeated at the end of each level – after which the Princess appears again, with more desperate cries for help.

## CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

- Keep jumping and firing on Level One – you'll easily get to the end.
- Make sure that you collect the power symbols at the start of the second level: you'll really need them later.
- On Level Two, position the spaceplane between four of the worm holes and the worms will not touch you.
- When in the car, your best chance of defeating the large aliens is to continuously jump and shoot.

When US Gold's GO! brought out *1943* I thought they'd forgotten how to produce a decent vertically-scrolling action game. With Gold's *LED Storm* (Smashed on page 12) out this month I was forced to eat my words – *Last Duel* has shoved them even further down my throat. Tiertex (*Thunder Blade*) have produced some slick presentation combined with some impressive graphics (albeit a bit jerky at times) to form another addictive shoot-'em-up. The frequent appearances of the Princess add that extra bit of addiction. It may not be as good as *LED Storm*, but at least you can shoot things!

**PAUL 75%**



▲ What do you mean, it won't run on *LED*-free petrol?

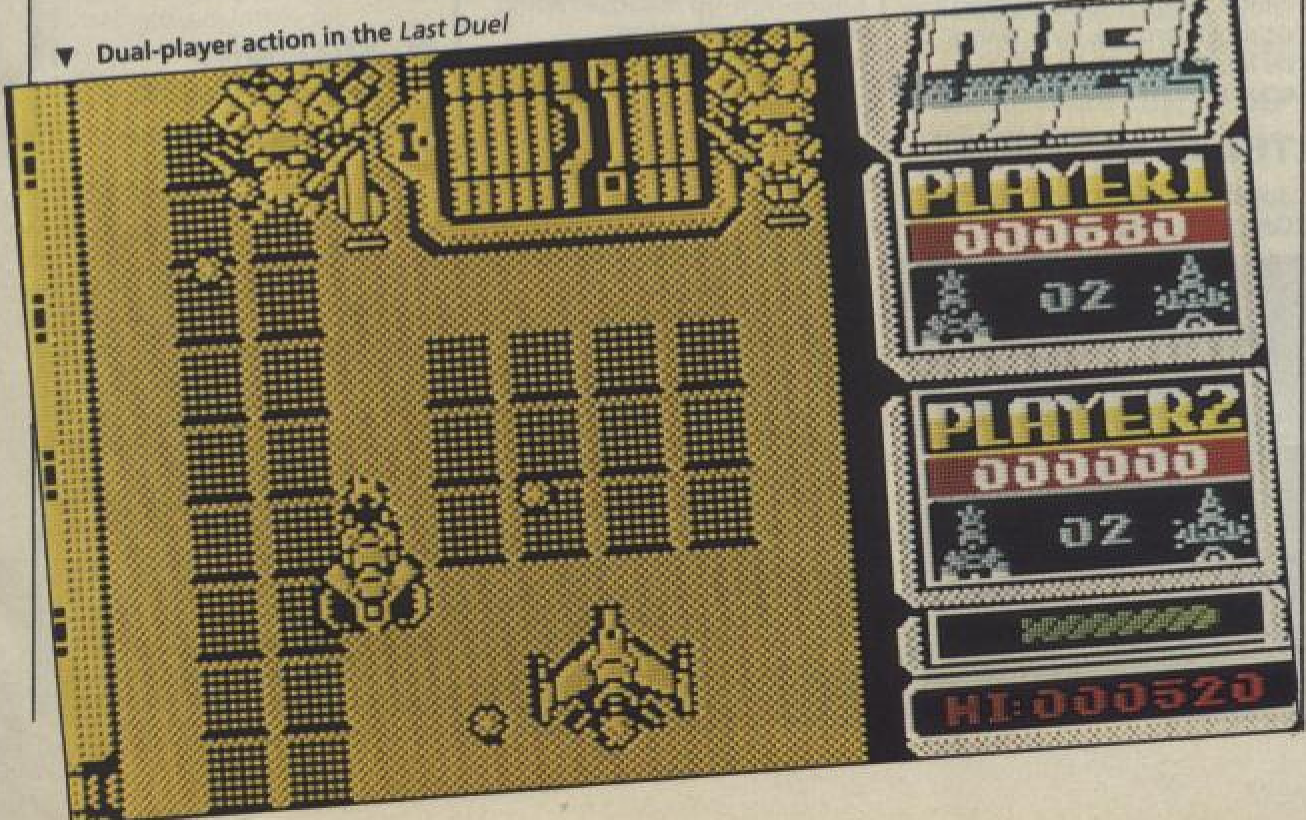
**MARK** ***Last Duel*** **is terribly frustrating. But when eventually mastered the game reveals itself to contain more luck than judgement. And unlike say *LED Storm* I never had the feeling there was a good game underneath worth persistence. It's also very difficult to see what's happening on later stages, with lots of bullets swirling over a repulsive purple background. Disappointing.**

**62%**

The monochromatic vertical scrolling and the car suggest a *LED Storm* clone, but here the scrolling is glitchy and not as fast. The main fault with *Last Duel*, though, is the way progress can easily be made by mindless, continuous jumping and blasting. Only partially compensating for this fault are some impressively-large squirming monsters and the two-player option. Worth a look, but certainly not the game to break my *LED Storm* addiction.

**PHIL 70%**

▼ Dual-player action in the *Last Duel*




## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** some impressive, large aliens, but dubious vertical scrolling
**Sound:** in-game effects
**Options:** one or two players
**General rating:** don't be fooled by the car – this is not a driving game, but an above average shoot-'em-up

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 77% |
| Graphics | 67% |
| Sound | 70% |
| Playability | 72% |
| Addictive qualities | 69% |
| **OVERALL** | **70%** |

# RING WARS

● ***Wringing the last out of a tired genre***

**Producer Cascade**
**Uranium 235 £8.95 cass**
**Author Vektor Graphix**

Sometimes the downside of bad programming is a bit more serious than a spot of colour clash. Take, for example, an alien fleet of Ring Worlds designed to locate uninhabited planets and extract valuable minerals. Hundreds of them are drifting into the Solar System and widespread human colonies soon discover how well they detect life.




▼ **The strategy bit in Cascade's latest**

As the pilot of a space fighter you soon come under attack from Ring World defence drones. While your fighter flies on automatic pilot toward the World you flip between six screens trying to blast the drones. Once you're through to the World you fly inside, and immediately come under heavy fire. Your objective is the World's centre where a nuclear bomb will do most damage. Pylons have to be flown through to get on course, and once the bomb is dropped you have get out the way before the timer runs out.

Outside the World you can assess your damage; shield energy is measured on the left, with fuel on the right. Status and weapons screens show ammo levels, damage and faults. To repair these you can hyperspace to the moons of surviving planets. Atmospheric entry is automatic, but manoeuvring into a hanger definitely isn't. The type of services offered by a hanger varies from moon to moon. Once enough Ring Worlds have been destroyed their Mothership will appear, blow it up and you've completed the game.

Warping about space and blasting alien invaders will be familiar to anyone who's ever played the superior *Code-Name Mat*. New elements such as finding various services and bombing the reactor fail to significantly alter the over-familiar and repetitive nature of gameplay. Programming is very professional, however, with some good, fast-moving vector graphics. If you haven't played this type of game before it could prove entertaining for a while.

**STUART 61%**

### RINGING THE CHANGES

- Set bomb timer for at least four minutes.
- Get additional nuclear bombs from Jupiter's fourth moon.
- Note down what useful resources each moon contains.

**Fast vector graphics make the first run through the defence drones and anti-spaceship lasers exciting. Unfortunately by the second or third bomb run the appeal has begun to wear off. Despite being years older than *Elite* the gameplay is a considerable step back from that game's complexity and apart from the graphics it's all very dated.**

**MARK 48%**



▲ The arcade bit

**PHIL With a title like *Ring Wars* I was expecting a boxing game! But instead, it appears some doughnuts are attacking the solar system. First impressions are good, but misleading: shooting enemy ships is monotonous and there's nothing too remarkable inside the Ring Worlds either. Even with the ability to land on various moons, there really isn't much depth to what promised to be a complex game. Although technically competent, *Ring Wars* is really just a shallow shoot-'em-up masquerading as something more interesting – doughnut buy it.**

**51%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** fast, well-drawn wire-frame graphics . . .
**Sound:** . . . but only a single laser shot effect
**General rating:** it doesn't exactly run rings round the opposition

| | |
|---|---|
| **Presentation** | 72% |
| **Graphics** | 64% |
| **Sound** | 28% |
| **Playability** | 55% |
| **Addictive qualities** | 47% |

**OVERALL 53%**

● ***GI Joe in jungle jaunt***

**Producer Firebird**
**Purple hearts £7.95 cass**
**Author Blitter Animations**

Sensitive NATO documents have been stolen and taken into a 'politically sensitive' country. In response a trained assassin, and Killer: The Wonder Dog (!), are bundled into a plane to be taken into the foreign territory. Engine problems mean an early parachute drop, though, separating Killer and the elite warrior strangely known as an ordinary GI hero.



▲ **Suspicious looking trees in** *GI Hero*

If you choose to step into the GI's size 11 yomping boots then

# HELLFIRE ATTACK

● ***Stop noise pollution with Martech***

**Producer Martech**
**Earmuffs £8.99 cass**
**£14.99 disk**
**Author Gavin Wade**

Concerned by the number of deafening low-flying jets? Why don't you do something about it? Like writing to your local RAF base, your MP, or blasting them to a zillion pieces with a 20mm cannon? If you're of the latter mind *Hellfire Attack*'s for you. No hideously noisy afterburning engines here, just two discreet rotors and a

# GI HERO

**PHIL** **Killer is a brave mutt, running at enemy soldiers and biting their jugulars. Like him, the hero and guards are well animated, considering their size, and a large black 'shadow' around them avoids attribute clash. Sound is less impressive, merely consisting of gun shots and quiet footsteps, but even more disappointing is gameplay. Too much time is spent plodding aimlessly around the jungle, shooting the odd enemy. Although *GI Hero* has original qualities, such as the easy-to-use menu system, it is ultimately very yawn inducing.**

**58%**

your first objective is to find the dumb mutt (and be careful some Israelis haven't strapped it with explosives). The forest is crawling with troops who you must dispose of. Initially you've just four clips of ammunition, but ammo is littered all over the jungle. To reload the gun you must use a menu system, which allows you to use items (like wire cutters) and turn objects on/off (like the torch for dark caves).

Once found, your poochy pal gives you some vital assistance in defending yourself. But with or without Killer you only have 24 hours to find the papers and prevent an international scandal.

Trudge, trudge, trudge is all you seem to do in *GI Hero*, and although the monotony is occasionally broken by shooting troops I soon found my attention beginning to wander. The scenery is almost as dreary as the gameplay, just jungle and caves before you get to the base camp. Ambushes with three or more soldiers often proved fatal, even with Killer, who often went walkies on his own. And after playing this for a while, I too soon felt like going for a walk.

**MARK 54%**



▲ Where the flipping heck did he come from?

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** the extra-large sprites are well-animated
**Sound:** no tunes, mainly shooting effects
**Options:** definable keys
**General rating:** a nice game to look at, but unexciting to play

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 72% |
| Graphics | 74% |
| Sound | 33% |
| Playability | 59% |
| Addictive qualities | 54% |

## OVERALL 56%

### HOW THE DEVIL TO WYNNE

- Shoot only nine aircraft on Level One so you have to redo the Level – no penalty and you can earn more bonus lives.
- On harder levels shoot only required number of enemies and big jets, then fly high and keep out of the crossfire.
- Keep firing even as you're going down in flames – you might still hit something.
- Be liberal with smart bombs – you get them all back when you die or complete a level.

Essentially *Afterburner* with rotors this starts off with an impressive sampled 128K tune. Such technical prowess does not, however, extend to the game itself. The scrolling of ground-based objects is sluggish, and while their graphic outlines tilt left/right, the colour bands for a blue sky and green grass remain completely still. The helicopter itself is well-drawn, but the massive bullets it spits are identical to those fired by the enemy, making combat very confusing. Nevertheless, despite these problems *Hellfire Attack* is fairly playable, albeit rather repetitive and difficult, with a fast and well thought-out multiload. Worth a look.

**STUART 71%**

▼ *Not* the way to fly a helicopter



**PHIL** **Lacking the game content of *Thunder Blade* and the sheer speed of *Afterburner* this is rather second rate. The inlay describes it as 'gripping' but shooting down enemy aircraft is repetitive, while the sluggishness of the chopper soon induces tedium. Yet the biggest problem, literally, is the large helicopter sprite which obscures your view. OK, so the game has quite a few multiloaded levels, but they all play in much the same way. It's a pity but the best aspect of *Hellfire Attack* is the great title tune.**

**48%**

rotory 20mm cannon.

As wave after wave of ear-drum bursting jets rush by, blasting away with their guns, you've got to dodge the bullets and blast back. If the action gets a little tough, use a smart bomb to clear the air. On each level there's two or three slow, monster jumbo planes with dozens of engines to destroy as well. Splash the required number of noise-polluting enemies and you go on to the next level when you land. If not, you go around again.

As you'd expect there's a multiload, but it's very well-done; load the main program on side one, then flip the tape for the levels. Get killed and you simply rewind to the start of tape two and no messing about with tape counters. Other than that the game's a bit disappointing with enemy bullets very hard to see. Still, graphics are good, there's a great 128K tune and I found it fun for a while.

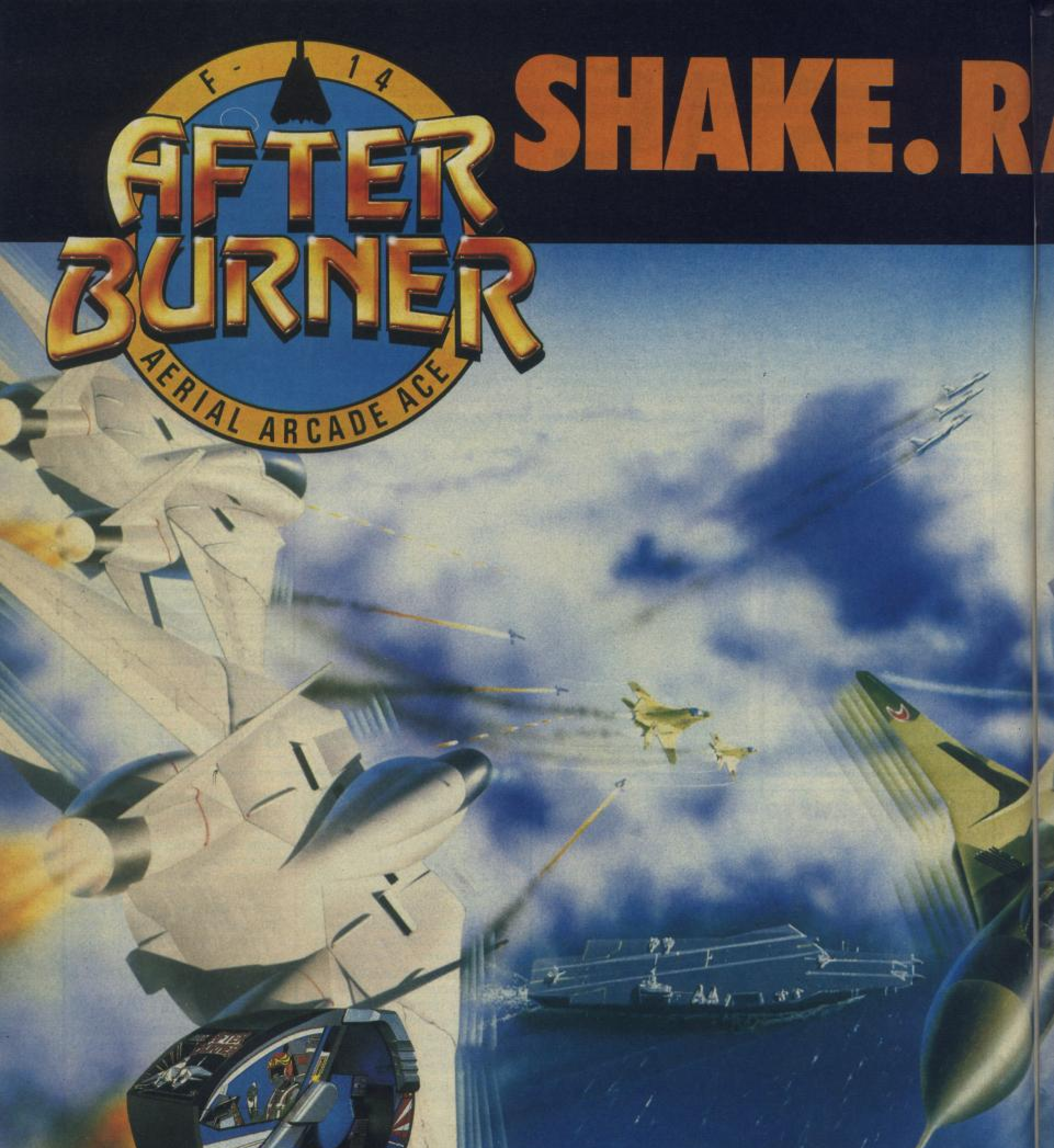
**MARK 70%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** well-drawn aircraft, but the scenery is dull and slow-moving
**Sound:** an amazing sampled title tune and decent in-game effects
**Options:** demo mode
**General rating:** a competent 3-D shoot-'em-up, but it's too slow to catch up with the superior *Afterburner* and *Thunder Blade*

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 74% |
| Graphics | 68% |
| Sound | 82% |
| Playability | 70% |
| Addictive qualities | 65% |

## OVERALL 66%




ACTIVISION

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AFTERBURNER – 'THE ARCADE

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If you can't wait for your next exciting issue of CRASH be assured we've the answer to your prayers. As from now you can **telephone** three special *CRASH Hotline* numbers for the **latest playing tips, competitions, and the latest software release news**. The first Hotline-only competition prize is a magnificent **Alba Midi System**!

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# PHIL KING'S ADVENTURE TRAIL

Samara ventured into the long dark corridor, deep within CRASH Towers. What was that strange noise? It sounded like an animal, but what was it doing here? Had one of Phil's sheep lost its way? Yes, the sound was a distinct 'baa'.

But then, Samara heard a strange voice whispering 'Come closer, come closer'. A shiver ran down her spine as she found the way ahead was blocked by a pile of old AMTIX! binders covered in cobwebs. She could now hear footsteps coming from behind her. But as the shadows grew shorter, her anguish was quelled. The face of Phil King appeared from beyond the shadows, but he wasn't happy. In fact, he looked decidedly bedeviled by what stood before him.

'Baa! You've insulted one of my sheep for the last time Miss Sugar Face! One of my cousins lost his eyes to your Christmas lunch and now he has to have a guide-chihuahua. So now prepare to meet *your* death: we're having Samara pie for dinner.'

With that, Phil drew an axe from his side. He swiped at Samara's neck, one blow was enough. Torrents of crimson blood spewed out in a jet, leaving her head lying in the pool of her own blood. The hardened adventure reviewer had been in many dangerous situations in her travels but this time her luck was out – never to see Egypt again.

Mercifully, she could not know that the depraved reviewer then lopped off her limbs and tore out her intestines to make a nice pie (with Grandma Mangram's special pastry recipe), put it on gas mark 4 for two hours and had a nice dinner with diced carrots, mashed potato and treacle tart for pud. The adventure column was now King's. He sat down contented with the thought this was the best meal he'd had in ages.



## DIABLO!

**Nebula Designs Software, £7.95**

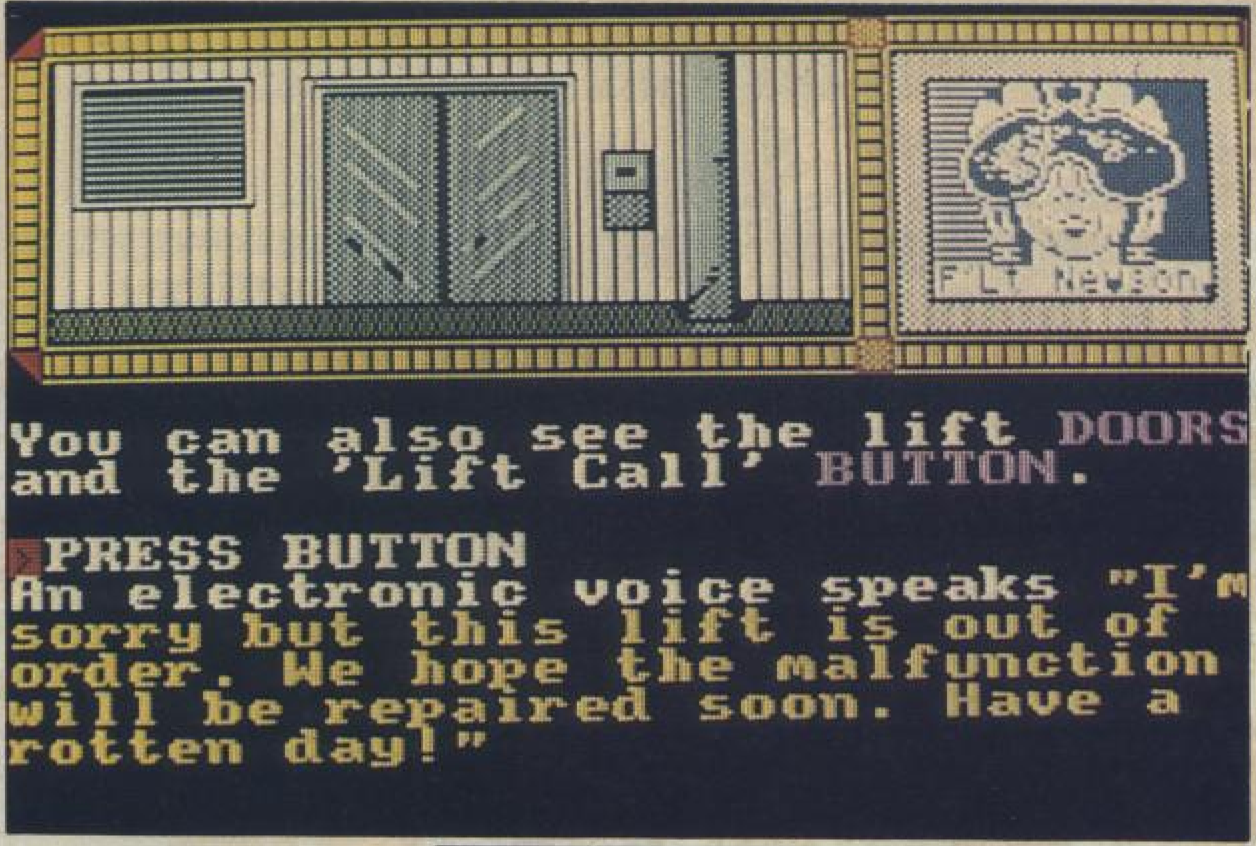
In the 22nd century human civilisation has spread throughout the galaxy under the 'benevolent' control of massive corporations. Nuclear-powered, faster-than-light travel is a fact of life and the ESS Discoverer is regarded as nothing special. A research ship it was sent to get biological specimens from the distant worlds of Edanus. When it failed to return it was presumed destroyed by rebels. That is, until it was discovered by some passing starfighters, drifting aimlessly through space, apparently deserted but for a glimmer of light in the cockpit and an eery, devilish silhouette there.

*Diablo!* is a homegrown adventure by Mark Cantrell and comes complete with extensive packaging, including a Player's Guide and Investigation Dossier. Detailed and informative these give a good sense of atmosphere. The program itself comes on two cassettes, for 48K and 128K owners.

The adventure begins once a special shuttle has docked with the Discoverer. The shuttle's crew consists of three military personnel, a doctor and a civilian. Four of these can be controlled individually (by using CONTROL 'whoever') while the civilian, Lawson, just wanders around on his own. Profiles of the crew are included in the dossier along with a rough plan of the Discoverer.

A few turns into the game a bomb goes off. Bad enough in itself if you're in the wrong location, but investigation reveals that only one of your own crew could've planted it! While glumly considering suspects you might admire the game's presentation, which is excellent. A graphic view is given for most locations, shown in a window at the top left of the screen alongside a well-drawn portrait of the current character. Verbose descriptions scroll upwards in the bottom two thirds of the screen, in either normal or stylised fonts according to your choice. You can also switch between normal compass directions and a more appropriate starboard, aft, port system.

The attention to detail in the presentation is also shown in play itself. The *PAW* parser is typically refined with useful OOPS and ▶




AGAIN commands, as well as the usual RAMSAVE. But where it really scores highly is in the extensive EXAMINE and SEARCH commands which can be used for the majority of objects and features.

Interaction between characters is also very good, and important to make progress. Speech is achieved by typing SAY TO character x 'whatever' and there is also a RADIO command when your crew is separated. Characters can be told to do almost any action or in the 128K game, even to LOOK AROUND the ship. But by far the most useful instruction is FOLLOW ME, so by controlling one character who has told the others to follow him/her, you can move the team en masse.

The very tense atmosphere of the game is achieved by some great descriptions, telling how you feel worried about what could be lurking in the shadows. Such worries are well justified as you'll often end up reading spine-chilling accounts of death: pulped bones and decaying flesh are detailed in almost 'video nasty' depth. Clues to the demise of your crew members are weird scratch marks on some of doors and shreds of a blood-stained lab coat. It seems a strange alien creature is on the rampage. And if you find and play Dr X's data disk you can discover exactly what it is.

*Diablo!*'s superbly suspenseful atmosphere is obviously reminiscent of the excellent *Alien* film, but there's more than enough plot differences to keep you off-balance. With three large decks to explore this is a remarkable challenge, not least because of its homegrown origin.

If you fancy having your intestines ripped out etc, you can get hold of this excellent adventure for £7.95 (inc p&p) direct from Mark Cantrell at *112 Upperwoodlands Road, BRADFORD, West Yorkshire BD8 9JE.*

**Overall 88%**

# THE LOST LEGACY OF XIM

**Skyslip Software, £9.95 tape**

The name's Shaw, Rick Shaw, and no-one takes me for a ride. After solving *A Simple Case Of Espionage* (reviewed last issue), I've got yet another devious crime to solve. Apparently a precious jewel-encrusted bird has been stolen. Once owned by the ancient dictator Xim its current owner, Sir Robert Harker, is more than a little worried.

The thieves have sent a ransom note to Harker demanding two million pounds. If it's not delivered in six hours time the eagle will be sold on the black market. My only clue is the postmark of a small coastal town on the ransom note. It's not much, but Sir Robert offers the use of his private jet. This is the way to travel, huh?

Unfortunately when I awake from a short nap I find myself bound hand and foot on the cabin floor. After a brief moment of confusion my razor-like mind drew the obvious conclusion that the pilot was in the employment of a mysterious third party, also interested in buying the eagle. While mentally patting myself on the back for the speed of my deduction I was disturbed to hear gunshots in the cockpit. Seconds later a man rushed out and the plane began to dive.

I've been in plenty of tough corners in my time, but even I began to sweat about this one. Initially the problem seemed simple – there was a glass tumbler on a nearby table; knock it over, smash it and I'd be out of here faster than your grandmother could say 'drugged drinks'. Unfortunately getting to the table proved virtually impossible, my body just wouldn't respond to any of the normal commands. In frustration I took out my portable phone and gave Skyslip a call, or two or three. They finally gave me the number of Mr Adams, but he never answers the phone – all this hassle on the first location! Finally, just as I was about to toss the tape into the incinerator, I got a call. The solution was amazingly obscure: EDGE ME TOWARDS TABLE (and only this exact wording works – EDGE TOWARDS TABLE does not).

Once this problem is overcome, finding a parachute and getting out of the plane was easy. But it's not long before the restrictive vocabulary impedes progress once more. After landing in the sea and swimming to the shore, I found a rucksack. But neither EXAMINE or SEARCH RUCKSACK, reveals its contents: the more obscure LOOK IN RUCKSACK does.

Further exploration of the countryside and nearby town exposed yet more input problems. For instance, in the police station I could pick up a pair of handcuffs, which on being examined revealed a small key, but this can only be picked up by first dropping the handcuffs and subsequently taking the key! This sort of problem is enough to make a vicar kick in a stained glass window, to paraphrase a famous colleague. Further irritation is provided by the limited number of turns before you die of hunger, if food isn't quickly found.

On the plus side, the 128K version of the game is graced with nice graphics, present in every location, including some good isometric views of rooms (as in *A Simple Case Of Espionage*). But good presentation does little to enhance such an ill-thought out adventure, with gameplay reduced to a series of word-finding exercises. Only detectives desperate for a new case should consider this one.

**Overall 42%**






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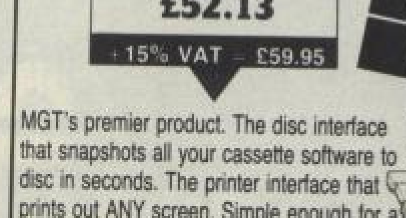
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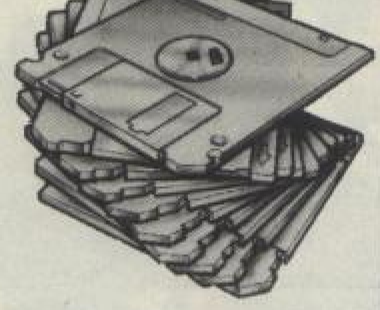
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# LM's FORUM



**'New Year cheer 'twixt seasons drear' – that's what grandma muttered when I got home rather late on New Year's Eve (well, it was New Year's Day, actually). I'm not normally one for pubs – horrible crowded, smoky places that they are – and I felt quite unwell surrounded by all those people in the remote Abbey Inn where the Towers crew dragged me.**

**But that's all by the by – I trust *you* all had suitably merry holidays, and that the next season won't be too 'drear' where software is concerned! 1989 should be interesting, what with yet more Freescape developments promised by Incentive, some excellent-sounding Sega coin-op conversions from Activision,** WEC Le Mans **and** Dragon Ninja **from Ocean, the usual magnificent simulations from Electronic Arts,** The Munsters **from Again Again, and a couple of big licences from Grandslam –** Thunderbirds **and** The Running Man **. . .**

**How do they do it all? Well, this month's £30 software prize goes to someone who wants to know just that.**

## HOW TO SUCCEED IN SOFTWARE BY REALLY TRYING

Dear Lloyd
We've all heard of these so-called whiz kids who spring out of nowhere with a brilliant game once in a while, but what are the chances of being one? Very minimal I expect.

Well, what jobs are on offer in the computer world? And are they guaranteed? I expect that most computer programmers have their moments of glory and then are never heard of again.

If your heart is set on joining a company, which is best to join? Probably a fully established one, such as Ocean.

If you want to get in on the computer scene do you need any experience? Is it possible for an ordinary person to send in ideas for games to receive any money and possibly a job?

What about a job as a reviewer, like yourself – is any experience necessary if someone wants to join the team?

I think most of us would like to be in the limelight sometime so we try to produce our own games.

We buy utilities such as *GAC* or *PAW*. Once we have produced a reasonable game, off it goes to a company. What sort of chance of getting a reply is there? Companies must get inundated with them!
*Scott Maddy, Basildon*

**It's certainly very tough to become a professional programmer these days, but the news isn't all bad. There is no obvious 'training' for programmers – it's not like being a dentist or a chartered surveyor – so software houses really do look at what they're sent, because that's the only way new geniuses are discovered.**

**Having said that, they're unlikely to be interested in anything written with a game-creation utility – anyone worth their salt these days writes in machine code.**

**Large full-price houses such as Ocean increasingly employ teams of specialists: some people who only work on graphics, others who only work on music, others who only work on game-design. But it's very difficult for a lone freelancer to match the quality of these teams, simply because it would take so long.**

**So if you've written a game which is half-decent, a budget house is a much better bet. Code Masters, Alternative, Mastertronic and Silverbird are the big names in budget now. Of course, they tend to pay less than full-price houses.**

**Jobs as reviewers are very difficult to find – there can't be more than 20 or so Spectrum reviewers in the entire country. But when a position does come up, once again it's a question more of ability than of letters after your name.**

**Finally, don't forget there are thousands of people working in computing *outside* the games area – and much as I hate to use CRASH to promote another magazine, I'd advise you to look out for the May issue of THE GAMES MACHINE (on sale April 20). Erstwhile Man Ed Barnaby Page, who's now across the hall at TGM, tells me he's doing a big feature that month on all the different ways to make a living through bits and bytes.**

**LM**

## READERS' ALL TIME TOP 30

| Position | Issue 48's position | Title | Software house | Number of times in Hotline chart | Number of times Number One | Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ( 1) | **Match Day** | Ocean | 43 | 0 | 926 |
| 2 | ( 2) | **Elite** | Firebird | 33 | 2 | 801 |
| 3 | ( 3) | **Commando** | Elite | 29 | 5 | 663 |
| 4 | (18) | **Gauntlet** | US Gold | 19 | 8 | 486 |
| 5 | ( 4) | **Lords Of Midnight** | Beyond | 29 | 0 | 454 |
| 6 | ( 6) | **Paperboy** | Elite | 20 | 2 | 450 |
| 7 | ( 5) | **Bombjack** | Elite | 17 | 0 | 394 |
| 8 | (▶ | **Head Over Heels** | Ocean | 16 | 0 | 393 |
| 9 | (22) | **Cobra** | Ocean | 18 | 0 | 387 |
| 10 | (▶ | **Enduro Racer** | Activision | 14 | 1 | 342 |
| 11 | ( 7) | **Sabre Wulf** | Ultimate | 16 | 6 | 313 |
| 12 | ( 8) | **The Way Of The Exploding Fist** | Melbourne House | 17 | 3 | 311 |
| 13 | ( 9) | **Knight Lore** | Ultimate | 14 | 3 | 304 |
| 14 | (15) | **Quazatron** | Hewson | 16 | 1 | 303 |
| 15 | (16) | **Batman** | Ocean | 18 | 0 | 301 |
| | (▶ | **Renegade** | Imagine | 11 | 1 | 301 |
| 17 | (20) | **Uridium** | Hewson | 13 | 0 | 298 |
| 18 | (▶ | **Starglider** | Rainbird | 16 | 0 | 297 |
| 19 | (10) | **Atic Atac** | Ultimate | 13 | 0 | 294 |
| | (▶ | **Exolon** | Hewson | 11 | 2 | 294 |
| 21 | (11) | **Hypersports** | Imagine | 16 | 1 | 293 |
| 22 | (12) | **Match Point** | Psion | 19 | 0 | 289 |
| 23 | (13) | **Ghosts 'n' Goblins** | Elite | 13 | 3 | 280 |
| 24 | (14) | **Jet Set Willy** | Software Projects | 12 | 3 | 279 |
| 25 | (▶ | **Zynaps** | Hewson | 12 | 0 | 274 |
| 26 | (16) | **Daley Thompson's Decathlon** | Ocean | 16 | 0 | 271 |
| 27 | (19) | **Doomdark's Revenge** | Beyond | 15 | 0 | 263 |
| | (▶ | **Match Day II** | Ocean | 9 | 4 | 263 |
| 29 | (21) | **Manic Miner** | Bug Byte | 13 | 1 | 258 |
| 30 | (23) | **Alien 8** | Ultimate | 12 | 1 | 249 |



# MY CHART BELONGS TO YOU

Dear Lloyd
I must complain about the charts in CRASH. As I have bought CRASH from Issue 30 I am astonished that the charts never seem to change the games, but always show the same games month in and month out in a different position.

Why is this? I bet I could name ten games at least that will be in the charts in, say, four months' time. Please try to do something to change this, and put the games that people think should be there to be there.
*C Bradshaw, County Durham*

**The CRASH charts depend on readers' votes, so if anyone's going to change things I think it has to be YOU!!!!**

**Obviously, some games are perennially popular, and these deserve to hold their places in the charts for months and years. But because the number of chart votes received is relatively small, just a handful of extra votes one month can tip the balance in favour of a particular game. That's why titles often seem to go up and down without rhyme or reason.**

**But to see just how much things DO change in the charts, take a look at this mammoth set of figures compiled by longtime CRASHer** Stephen Jaggard **of Newmarket. Last year he sent us an all-time Hotline chart for Issue 48, and here's an updated version covering Issues 4-58.**

**It should mostly explain itself, but there's one thing to note: the 'points' in the far right column are constructed by giving a game 30 for each time it's Number One, 29 for each time it's Number Two, and so on down to 11 points for each appearance at Number 20. (There used to be 30 entries in the Hotline chart, so then Number 30 got one point.)**

**LM**

# LOST NINJA?

Dear Lloyd
The queries that have come to my mind over this last year have been small and would be of no bother to you in that busy tower of CRASH.

A problem I've had is with mail-order companies. What annoys me is that they advertise games they haven't got. One example was *The Last Ninja*. CRASH previewed it in the July 1987 issue, and in January 1988 it was advertised by Activision. Foolishly, I ordered it from a mail-order company and waited three months before I found out that the game was to be abandoned and before I received my money back.

But in September I ordered System 3's *Last Ninja 2*. I was convinced that it was finished, as a POKE for it had been printed in another Spectrum mag, and the CRASH demo had been released. So I ordered it from a different company.

Now in Issue 59 you reviewed it, and after waiting for nearly two months I still haven't received my game.

I'm sure my first delay was not the fault of anybody, just a mistake and I accept that. But this second delay must be the fault of someone, unless *Last Ninja 2* doesn't exist either and someone's been leading me on.
*Chris Welstu, Wellingborough*

**Mail-order companies are an excellent idea as they save trudging round the shops, but unfortunately there are a lot of cowboys in the business. If you order a game and you don't receive it within a reasonable period – say three or four weeks (the company's ad will usually say how long it takes) – KEEP ON BOTHERING THEM.**

**Phone and write once or twice a week till you've received a satisfactory answer – it may be that the game really was delayed in production, but they shouldn't advertise it unless they know it's going to be available.**

**If you still don't have any luck, ask your parents if they'd get their lawyer to write a letter. This will cost very little if anything at all – it's a very quick job for a solicitor's office – but will probably scare the company into dealing with your order.**

**Finally, if nothing comes of that either, contact the Advertising Standards Authority. They don't have any legal power, but investigate hundreds of cases of misleading advertisements, and publish regular reports – which seriously embarrass the firms mentioned! The ASA, which is a very helpful and sensible organisation, gets particularly upset at people who advertise things which aren't available.**

**Their address is: Brook House, 2-16 Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HN. If you do get in touch, let them know CRASH sent you – and ask for a copy of their Silver Jubilee information booklet, which is fascinating!**

**Good luck,**
**LM**

# FROM RUSSIA WITHOUT GRAPHICS

Dear Gentlemen
I am a Russian computer amateur writing to you on an urgent matter. I am 15 years old and I am learning in an English-oriented school; since the age of 14 I have been a computer lover.

Because there is a shortage of good computers in our country, almost all Soviets who like computer games and programming must make little computers themselves, but some problems arise with components purchase. Nevertheless, a year ago I made my first machine – the design was taken from a Soviet hobby magazine.

Computer includes a 8080 CPU, 2K 2716 EPROM and 32K RAM of 16 4116 ICs [*integrated circuits*]. It is working pretty well, but has poor graphics – the video controller includes an 8275 IC.

Because of that, many of us are looking for a design with better graphics, and containing components available in Russia.

A year ago many chose the Sinclair ZX Spectrum model, which meets these requirements, though some rare special ICs like the ULA controller are not available here.

Looking through recent Sinclair magazines, I saw your advertising material devoted to the Spectrum +3 model and was very interested in it. I need to get some info from you about it: schematic diagrams, EPROM BIOS content, etc.

I would love to purchase your +3, but as you may know we Russians can't handle foreign currency, it's a crime here, and we can't use roubles [*Soviet currency*] for overseas purchases, either.

You may be interested to know that some Russians who have purchased the ZX Spectrum while abroad as tourists have sold it here for more than 2,000 roubles [*about nine months' average wages*]. But the customs and government have banned or limited the purchase of computers abroad, enlarging the interest and speculation everywhere.

I am writing this letter using a 'home-brewed' Sinclair ZX Spectrum in 'Russian style', made by one of my friends.
*Oleg Matveyev, Post Office Box 47, Arkhangelsk, 163068, USSR*

**Can anyone help Oleg by sending him circuit diagrams etc of the +3? He asked for his letter to be sent on to Amstrad, the Spectrum manufacturers, which we'll do – but I thought a reader might be more willing to assist.**

**It's amazing how much the Spectrum is selling for on the Russian black market – much the same is true of other Western electronic luxuries, like video recorders. Though the Soviet authorities have developed their own PCs and mainframes, they obviously haven't got into home computers yet, despite that wonderful Mirrorsoft game** Tetris, **which came from Russia!**

**Unfortunately, they're also hampered by somewhat ridiculous American laws which forbid many US computer companies to sell advanced technology into the USSR. So much for international understanding . . .**

**I tried the Department Of Trade And Industry to see if there was any problem with sending Spectrum circuit diagrams to the USSR, but it seemed all of Whitehall was *still* away on Christmas holiday. (Nice work if you can get it.) So, as grandma says, on your head be it!**

**Oleg's letter has been edited a little to make it clearer, but his English wasn't bad . . . no worse than half the dialects I hear in little Ludlow.**
**LM**



# ONE MAN'S CHOICE

***An all-time Top Ten***

- ☆ Joe Blade II
- ★ Barbarian
- ☆ Trapdoor
- ★ Dizzy
- ☆ Uridium
- ★ Manic Miner
- ☆ Cosmic Wartoad
- ★ M.O.V.I.E.
- ☆ U.C.M.
- ★ Supertrolley

PS Am I the first person to finish *Joe Blade II*? Just to prove I'm not telling porkies, here is the end message:

*'Congratulations! You have performed very admirably in completing your clean of the city.'*

*Benjamin Durkin, Hampshire*

# I'M THE ONE WHO CARES ABOUT YOU

Dear CRASH

I am just writing to say thank you for producing such a high-quality magazine.

It is totally brilliant – up-to-date reviews, fantastic cover tapes, brilliant prizes and much much more!

CRASH is megabrill, every review is in colour and not blurred, fantastic cover games, tech news, video news, millions of competitions with brilliant prizes, millions of pages, millions of reviews, playing tips and much, much more!

But my only disappointment about the magazine is that there is no page on the latest arcade machines and no arcade games charts. But who cares! While every other magazine is going down in standards yours is going up and up, a pleasure to read and buy.

*Gary Holcombe, Gwent*

PS The *RoboCop* demo was great!

**I've just noticed my hat doesn't fit anymore.**

**LM**

**More charts than a Nick Roberts disco this month, eh? Well, I could have written reams about Stephen Jaggard's Hotline discoveries, but I'll leave that to you – letters analysing what the chart shows will be very gratefully received.**

**'Make and mend, there's ne'er an end' – another of my grandma's more depressing sayings. Sometimes, and I know I shouldn't say this but I can't see her minding, I wish she'd look on the bright side of things!**

**I do, and I hope my postman does too, considering all he has to deliver to:**

**LLOYD MANGRAM'S FORUM**
**CRASH**
***PO BOX 10***
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***SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB***

**And *please* write 'personal attention of Mr Mangram', or something like that, on the envelope, as I prefer to open them myself. Same place next month?**

# ATARRIBLE DECISION

Dear Lloyd

Recently, late August in fact, I bought an Atari ST. I thought it was a far superior computer to my trusty 128K Spectrum. The graphics were amazing, the memory was massive and the Summer Pack seemed to be an excellent deal. I saved up a bit of cash and borrowed the rest from my mum.

The next day, I strolled into my local computer shop with £400 and asked for an ST. With paying cash, I got a mouse mat and joystick lead free as well.

That was probably the most stupid financial decision I had ever made. Now, two months later . . . I have realised what a wonderful computer the Spectrum is!!! My advice to anyone that is thinking of upgrading to an ST is, don't!! Instead, just buy yourself a +2 or +3, because you'll probably find that you'll begin to get bored with the ST games and realise what a stupid mistake you've made.

Anybody that says 'Spectrums are dying' is completely wrong – the Spectrum is stronger than ever!!!

*Les Floyd, Carlisle*

**I agree – though there are some good games on the ST and Amiga, the games alone don't justify spending £300 or more. The only time to consider an ST or Amiga, in my opinion, is if you are very strongly interested in graphics work.**

**Some would say music-making is also a reason to buy the ST (not the Amiga – no MIDI port), but judging from full bookings at the Bates Motel the Spectrum's still just fine for that!**

**LM**




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# THE CRASH DIRECTORY

**Yes folks, it's that time of the year again – it's The CRASH Review Index. The following index is a full list (with ratings etc) of all the games reviewed in Issues 48-59 of CRASH. Staple this to the previous years' index (in Issue 48) for the comprehensive run-down on all the games reviewed in the past five years of CRASH. Yet again, many thanks must go to IAN DOGGETT of Kirton, Ipswich for compiling the massive index (your CRASH sub has been duly extended – so there's no excuse for the lack of an index for 1989!).**

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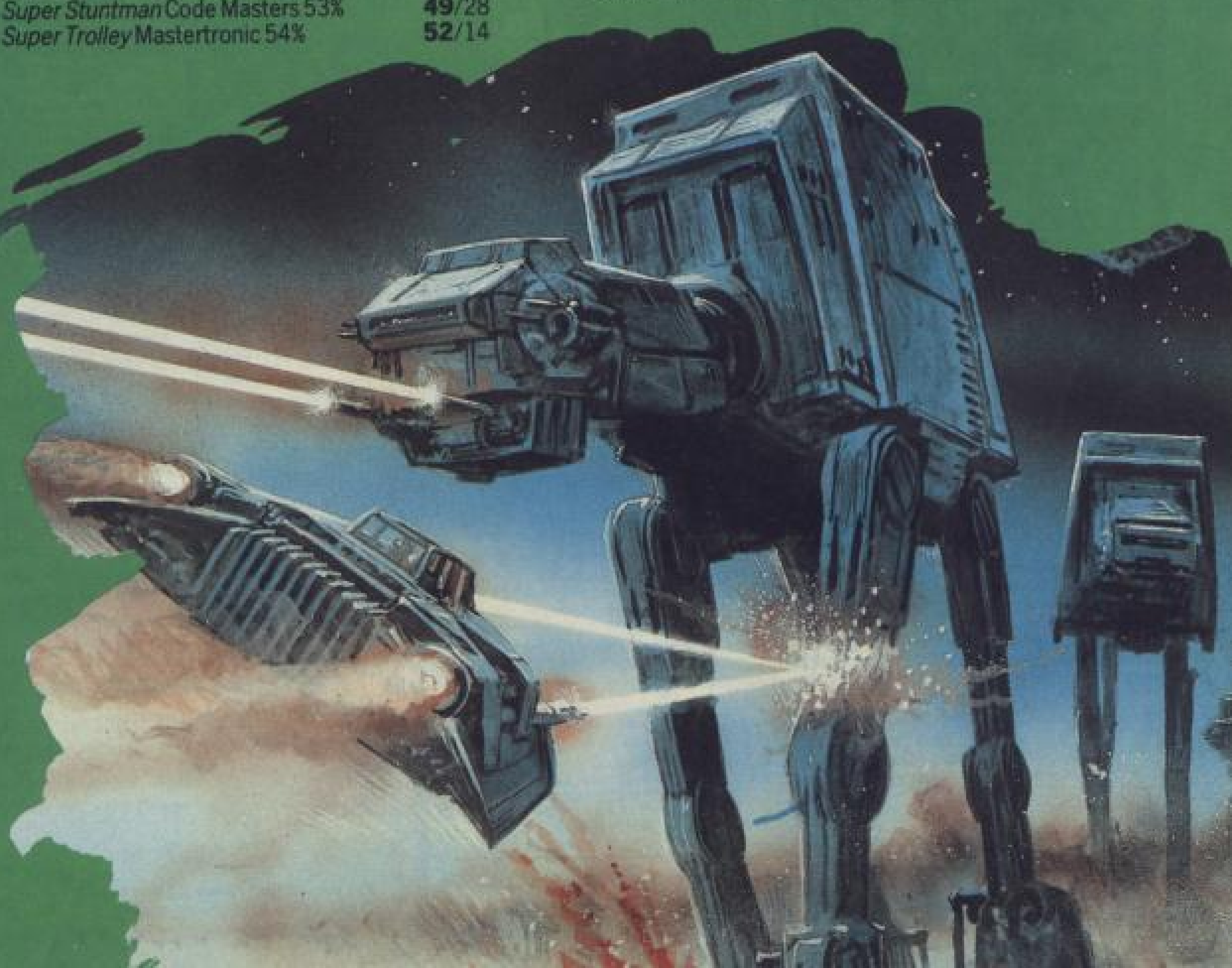




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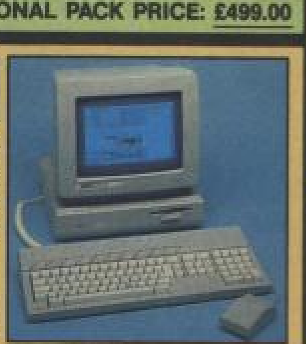
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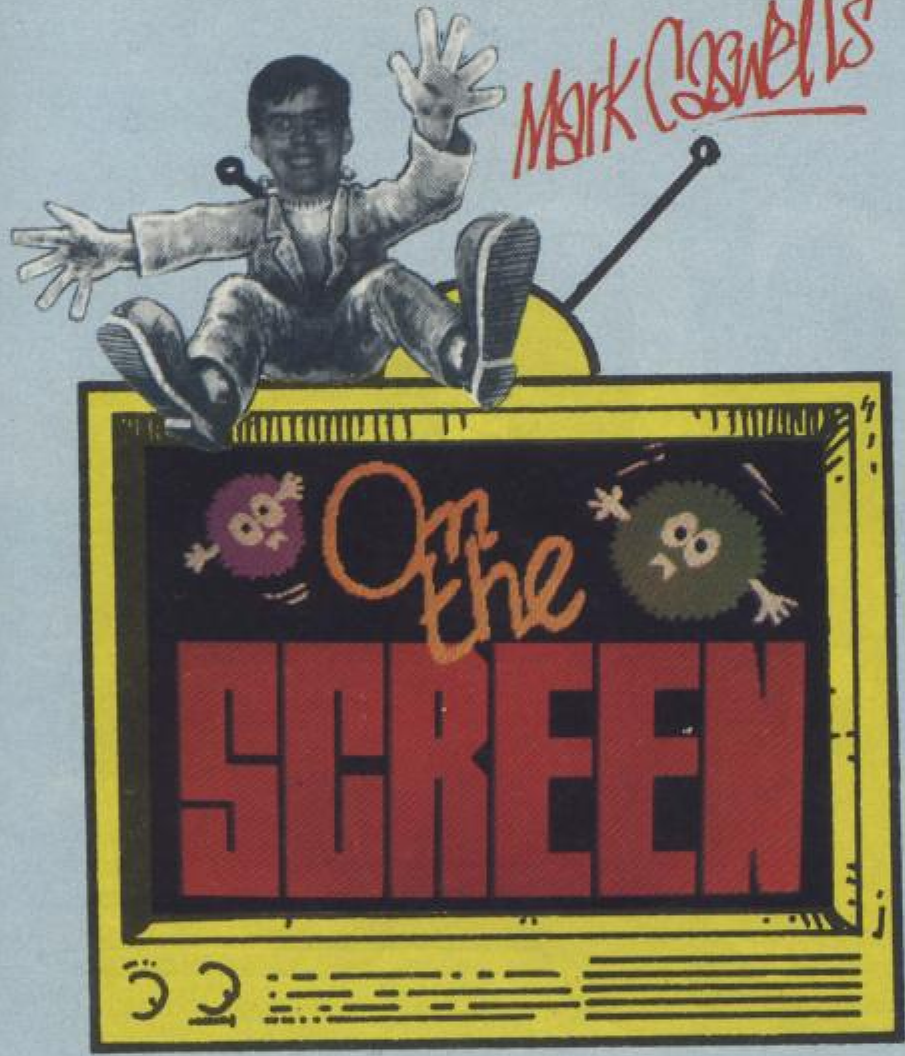
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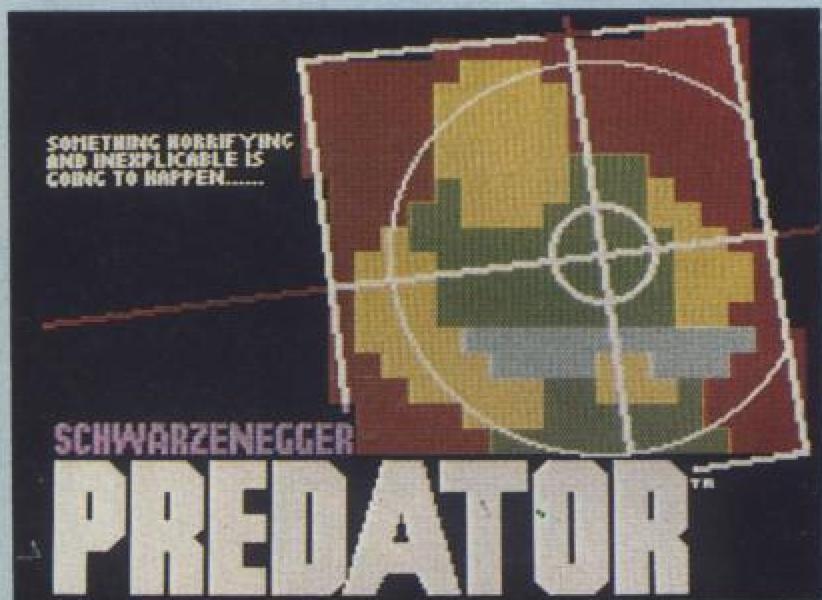
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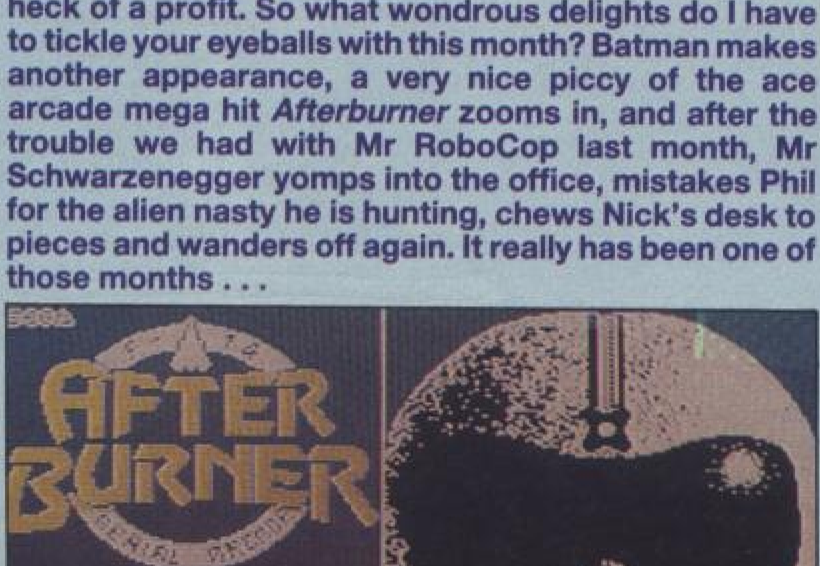




▲ Aaagh! Look out, Arnie's about! It was bad enough having RoboCop rampaging around the office last month. Now we have Austria's answer to a one-man army stomping into the office and ordering everyone about (though I for one won't argue with him). Thanks again go to P Hetherington.

**Borag Thungg earthlets, as a certain green skinned alien says, how were your Yuletide festivities? Mine were great, lots of turkey and presents, boring TV programmes and even more boring relatives who show up at Christmas time. Did you get all the presents you wanted? I'll tell you the thing I hate most, getting a present that needs batteries; you always find that they aren't supplied and you have to wait until after the Christmas Holiday before you can get any. I think next year I'll buy a van load of batteries prior to Christmas and sell them on Christmas Day, I bet I would make a heck of a profit. So what wondrous delights do I have to tickle your eyeballs with this month? Batman makes another appearance, a very nice piccy of the ace arcade mega hit *Afterburner* zooms in, and after the trouble we had with Mr RoboCop last month, Mr Schwarzenegger yomps into the office, mistakes Phil for the alien nasty he is hunting, chews Nick's desk to pieces and wanders off again. It really has been one of those months . . .**



▲ Batman is one of my favourite comic book characters, and he appears yet again in the hallowed halls of On The Screen. Mikkel Helbig Hansen, from Denmark, sent in this masterpiece of Batman action taken from the classic comic novel *The Dark Knight Returns*. And to answer your query Mikkel, if I had more screen shots from people in Scandinavian countries I would happily print them.




▲ Is it a bird? Is it that costumed nut who wanders around in a blue leotard and red longjohns? Nope, it's a Grumman F-14 Tomcat, and it's the star of the new Activision game *Afterburner* (86%, Issue 59). P Hetherington from Enfield in Middlesex is obviously a fan of the arcade coin-op.

That's the end of another fun-packed episode of On The Screen, will Batman catch his villain? Will Arnie bring down the F-14 with the awesome arsenal at his disposal? Who knows, or really cares? My plea in the Christmas issue for more colour screens seems to have paid off; the OTS pages now look much brighter and fresher with a liberal splash of colour (although not too many 'hot' screens). So please keep up the good work because if you're the lucky first prize winner you will receive £40 worth of your favourite games, and the rest on the page earn their senders £10 worth of software. How to win a fabulous prize? – it's very simple, just design a screen and place it on either cassette or disk. Then pop it into an envelope (remembering the SAE if you want your work returned), and send it to the usual address. So don't be a grexnix, send all your material to **MARK 'FRANCIS BACON' CASWELL, On The Screen, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.** Splundig Vur Thingie!

# CECCO'S LOG

## Stardate: 15 November 1988

A couple of incredibly boring programmer people have suggested that I ought to talk more about the technical aspects of programming *Stormlord*, rather than waffling on about things in general. Well, as I aim to please everybody, here goes . . .

A six t-state enhancement to the scroll routine has allowed a sillisecond (0.00000000000000003 sec) more raster time in which to process the omni-inertial, fractal based, sprite by-pass counter-break in the main control segment. As all intelligent people know, the counter-break method of coding really does need a zerofied two millisecond output pulse to even out the rough Zen frequencies generated by the processor . . . (All queries about this should be addressed to Andrew 'the programmers see me as a friend' Hewson.)

▼ Raf Cecco on the battlements



## Stardate: 18 November 1988

I am informed that Nick and I (it's always Nick and I) have been invited up to CRASH Towers in far away Ludlow. I think it'll be nice to see that lot for once.

## Stardate: 21 November 1988

I've started coding up the part of *Stormlord* that will handle all the object manipulation in the game. I only have a rough idea exactly what sort of objects will be in the final game, but that isn't really important at the moment. All that needs to be working is a system whereby object A can be picked up or swapped with object B, and object A can be used to trigger an event like removing object B from the game man. A bit later on, I might, for example, decide that object A is a hammer and object B is a bottle. (He's getting a bit technical again – Ed.)

▼ 'Deadline? What deadline?'





▲ Raf Cecco and an unknown pedestrian pose beside a Ludlow Castle cannon (it's me, it's me – Ed)

## Stardate: 2 December 1988

At the speed of light in Nick's Metro, we set off from Reading for the CRASH offices in Ludlow. Having been assigned as chief navigator, I scrutinize the map closely and tell Nick to go due up and left a bit for about 150 miles.

After a couple of hours into the journey we're feeling very bored and tired with numb bottoms and dead legs. To bring a little cheer to our uncomfortable predicament, I invent a game. The

objective is to try and lock the inertia seat belts by violently jerking our chests forward. Nick had a distinct advantage as he could hold onto the steering wheel for extra leverage. This was all jolly good fun, but we decided to stop when the internal bleeding started. (Please don't try things at home, folks. Programmers are a special breed of person – Ed.)

On arrival in Ludlow we pick up graphics guy Hugh 'Err, yea, hi' Binns from Ludlow station (platform) and make our way to CRASH Towers. We all barge up the sixty billion stairs to the CRASH office. On the door is pinned a vehement (RCLWD) No Smoking sign (I doubt that anyone who smokes could actually climb all those stairs).

We all barge in. You know those sort of plush offices with Habitat furniture and glamorous, model-girl secretaries and receptionists? Well, the CRASH office is nothing like that. Instead we are greeted by good old Dominic 'insert superlatives here' Handy, who promptly barges us back down all those stairs to grab some lunch.

I comment on how 'quaint' Ludlow is, as this seems to wind Dominic up no end (quaint, quaint, quaint, QUAINT! . . . Ha ha!). Negotiating the ingenious 'free for all' road junctions that exist in Ludlow, we make our way to big bad Dom's favourite (and Ludlow's only) restaurant. As we begin to order the most expensive things on the menu, Dom's credit card squeals in dismay. (But what do you expect from programmers who've become accustomed to extremely luxurious and glamorous lifestyles?).

After lunch it was back to CRASH Towers to show off *Stormlord* and take a few more silly photographs for the Log. Someone had the ingenious idea of popping over to Ludlow Castle and taking a picture of me being thrown off a *very* high wall by Dominic and his burly minders. Luckily they didn't get a photo' of me landing on my backside. (What more Dominic? Raf being fired out of a cannon? Raf leaping under a bus? Raf getting his own back – snarl!)



▲ Raf Cecco, the Ed, Hugh Binns, Nick Jones

## Stardate: 5 December 1988

It's time, I think, to put the 'front end' of the game in. This is the part of the program that you see as soon as it has loaded. I've opted for a very decorative mixture of a lovely character set drawn by Hugh and a smattering of some of the graphics that are in the game. I think the end result looks very pretty and effective. To this I have added a credits screen in which I mention everybody that has contributed to the program in terms of graphics or ideas.



◄ Hewson's Action Man making a prat of himself again

## Stardate: 19 December 1988

It's eight in the evening and Andrew 'Kind at heart' Hewson has popped over to pick up (for a nominal charge) one of the kittens for his kids at Christmas (isn't that nice?). (No, not really. You're not supposed to give pets for Christmas . . . But seeing as it's Andrew . . . – Ed.)

## Stardate: 22 December 1988

A disk full of graphics arrives from Hugh. As it turns out, most of the stuff is for Nick and the C64 version of *Stormlord*. As well as more general background graphics, Hugh has started designing the objects that will be used to complete the adventures in *Stormlord*. He has begun with the obvious ones like keys, axes and knives – the more cryptic ones will follow later.

It's pretty much all downhill now as far as programming *Stormlord* goes. All the hard stuff is more or less out of the way. I can now concentrate on putting the actual 'game' together as opposed to just mucking about with the technical aspects of the program.

Apparently this could conceivable be the last log as *Stormlord* is pretty near to completion (that's what you think – Ed). If it is, then may I wish you my fondest regards and I hope you've enjoyed this little insight into a programmer's life (awful isn't it?). *Stormlord*, in all its majestic, super-smooth, scrolling glory (sorry), will be available around February time.

(Ha, ha. Revenge is mine. We'll just *have* to find out about a programmer's Christmas. So just one more month? Please, pretty please, Raf – Ed.)

# OLDIES UNLIMITED!

**What? Spent all your Christmas money already? Well, never fear, the golden oldie himself, PHIL KING, takes you on a tour of the latest budget-price rereleases . . .**

## THE GROWING PAINS OF ADRIAN MOLE

**Producer:** Ricochet
**Price:** £1.99
**Original rating:** 88%

The spotty adolescent with a passion for poetry and his beloved 'treacle-haired, dog-eyed' Pandora suffers yet more teenage angst in this Level 9 adventure. First released in April 1987 by Mosaic/Virgin it follows the format of the first Sue Townsend inspired game, *The Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole*. The tragicomedy of Mole family life is represented in diary form, with the player asked to make decisions for Adrian from time to time. Choices are limited to one of three options.

Adrian's objective is to be 100% popular with friends and family – an impossible quest you might think and certainly Adrian's intended good deeds have an amazing tendency to turn out the wrong way. If you're a fan of the books and/or TV series, this contains similar humour, some of it taken directly from the books, and some of it brand new material. A good budget buy.

***Overall*** ***82%***




## FIGHTER PILOT

**Producer:** Silverbird
**Price:** £1.99
**Original rating:** 86%

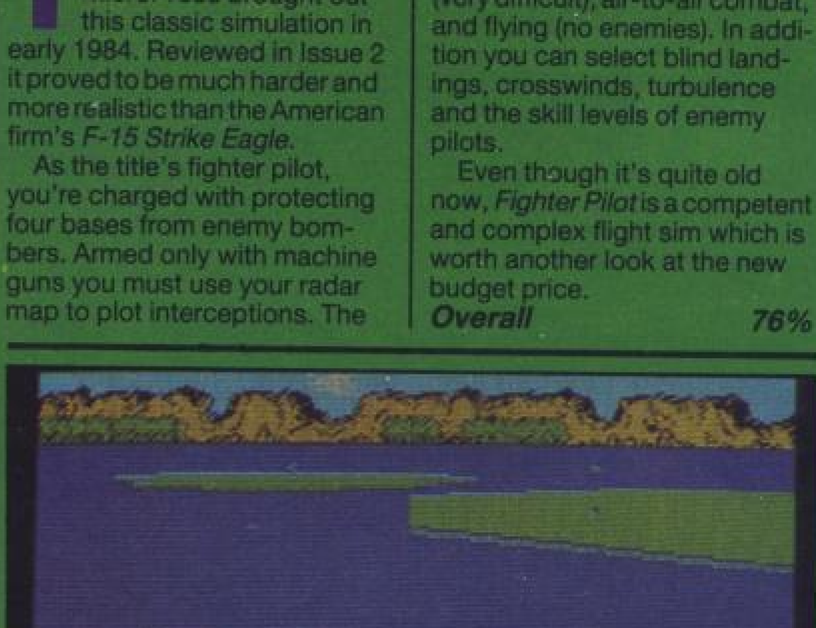
The British answer to MicroProse brought out this classic simulation in early 1984. Reviewed in Issue 2 it proved to be much harder and more realistic than the American firm's *F-15 Strike Eagle*.

As the title's fighter pilot, you're charged with protecting four bases from enemy bombers. Armed only with machine guns you must use your radar map to plot interceptions. The main view is a standard, out-of-the-cockpit 3-D. The standard array of instruments are provided, presented with excellent clarity.

Options allow the practise of all aspects of the game; landing (very difficult), air-to-air combat, and flying (no enemies). In addition you can select blind landings, crosswinds, turbulence and the skill levels of enemy pilots.

Even though it's quite old now, *Fighter Pilot* is a competent and complex flight sim which is worth another look at the new budget price.

***Overall*** ***76%***




## LEADER BOARD

**Producer:** Kixx
**Price:** £2.99
**Original rating:** 80%

After several disappointing attempts at golf simulations, *Leader Board*'s arrival April 1987 was all the more impressive. Undoubtedly the best of the genre, one of its main assets is the effective first-person, 3-D perspective view of each hole, with a new view created from wherever the ball lands. The game also contains four different courses which can be played in any order by up to four players. One of three skill levels can be selected for each player, allowing beginners to compete with experts.

Each player has fourteen clubs at his disposal, ranging from the hard-hitting woods to the essential putter. After selecting the appropriate club, the



shot is aimed simply by placing the cursor in the desired direction. The key to the game is in the hitting of the ball, however. You start your swing by pressing fire, a power meter then rises until you press fire again to set the correct percentage. A second, 'snap' meter then starts rising, this sets whether the ball is hit straight, hooked or sliced, fire must be pressed quickly and accurately to get the right one. (On Novice level balls are automatically hit straight.) The ball can also be sent off course by the wind on the professional skill level. If the ball lands in the water, a stroke is forfeited.

After almost two years *Leader Board* is still the top golf sim and a great buy at the new low price, although hardened golf fans might be more interested in the *Leader Board Par 3* (93%, Issue 57) compilation of *Leader Board*, *Leader Board Tournament* and *World Class Leaderboard*.

***Overall*** ***83%***




## SAI COMBAT

**Producer:** Silverbird
**Price:** £1.99
**Original rating:** 81%

This martial arts beat-'em-up followed a long line of similar games when it was released by Mirrorsoft in May 1986. Its unique feature was that the fighters were armed with sai sticks.

As in *Way Of The Exploding Fist* this beat-'em-up takes place over several levels in which the player tries to bash either a computer or human opponent. Each player has sixteen different moves to use, accessed in the typical beat-'em-up fashion, namely combinations of directions and fire.

Animation of the fighters is very good, although the background never changes. The computer opponents are fairly intelligent and tough to beat, but eventually bashing fighter after fighter (all identical) gets more than a touch monotonous. Nevertheless, *Sai Combat* is a well-implemented, no-nonsense combat game which is a good buy if you haven't got a decent martial arts beat-'em-up in your software collection.

***Overall*** ***72%***





## DYNAMITE DAN

**Producer:** Silverbird
**Price:** £1.99
**Original rating:** 94%

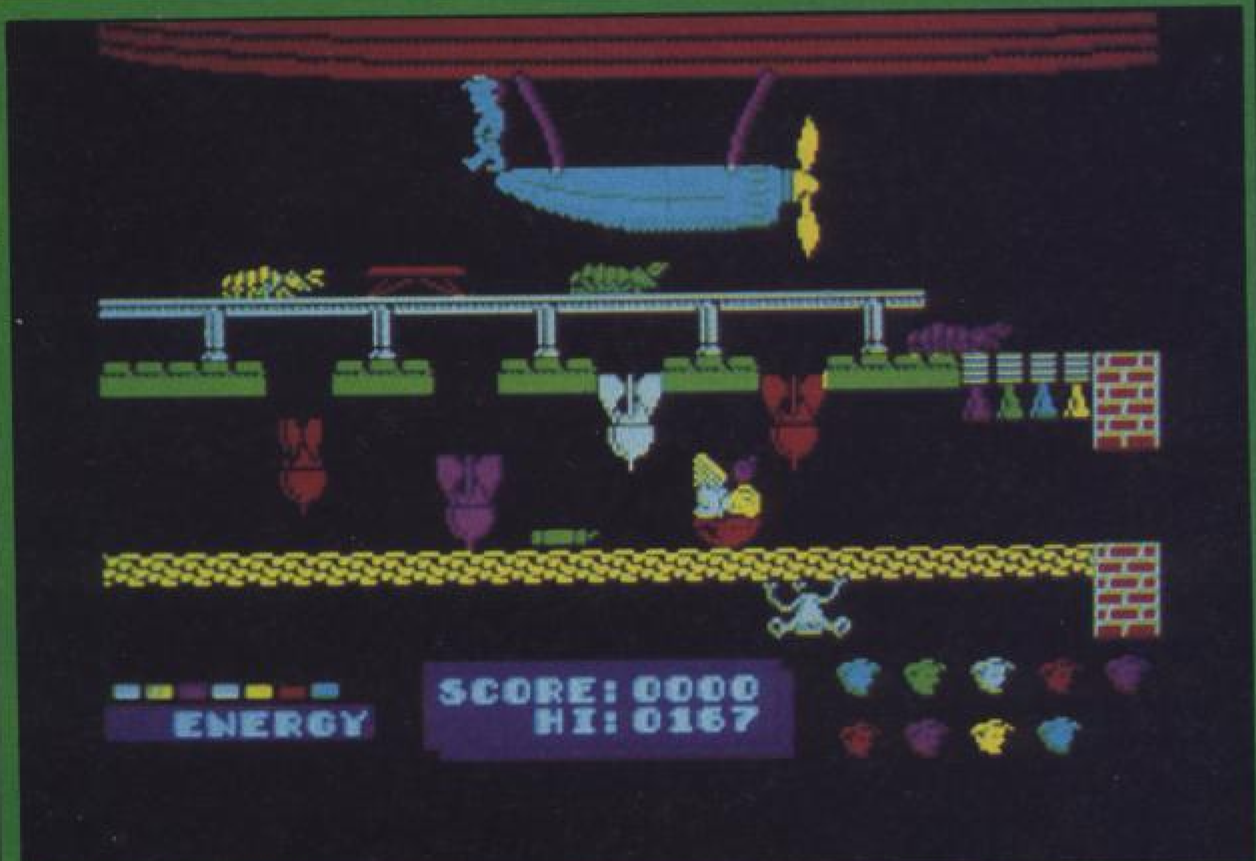
Rod Bowkett's masterpiece (included in the CRASH All Time Greats booklet, Issue 57) first appeared back in July 1985. Over three years later it still ranks as one of the Spectrum's most playable games.

The action takes place inside a vast mansion, inhabited by many strange creatures. Dan's girlfriend has been locked in a massive safe inside the house. The only way to free her is by collecting eight sticks of dynamite to blow the safe door open.

The 48-screen mansion contains many bizarre features, such as tightropes, teleports and even trampolines to add extra spring to Dan's jumps. Contact with nasties or long falls reduces Dan's energy, but it can be topped up by eating the food which is scattered around the house.

Colour is used extremely well, as is sound with different tunelets for collecting various objects. But what really makes *Dynamite Dan* a great game is its sheer playability which keeps you glued to the screen for hours. Now at a measly two quid it represents superb value for money – if you missed it first time around, you can't afford to miss it now.

***Overall*** ***92%***

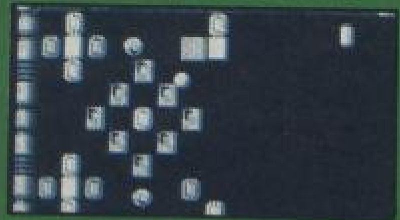


# KRAKOUT

**Producer:** Kixx
**Price:** £2.99
**Original rating:** 46%

This *Breakout* variant has dated very little – it's still as awful as when we first reviewed it in May 1987.

The player controls a bat to hit the ball which bounces around the play area, destroying coloured bricks. However, instead of the bat being at the base of the screen (as in most *Breakout*-type games), it's at the right-hand-side and is moved vertically to stop the ball leaving the screen. Some of the blocks need several hits to be destroyed, while others reveal a special letter, which if hit, activates a special feature. These include a double bat, an expanded bat and



glue to make the ball stick to the bat.

Despite some useful options to change the speeds of the bat and ball, *Krakout* is severely lacking in addictive qualities – the layout of the screens is unimaginative and boredom soon sets in. At only two quid less than its original price (£4.99) it isn't recommended.

***Overall*** ***37%***

# WAY OF THE TIGER

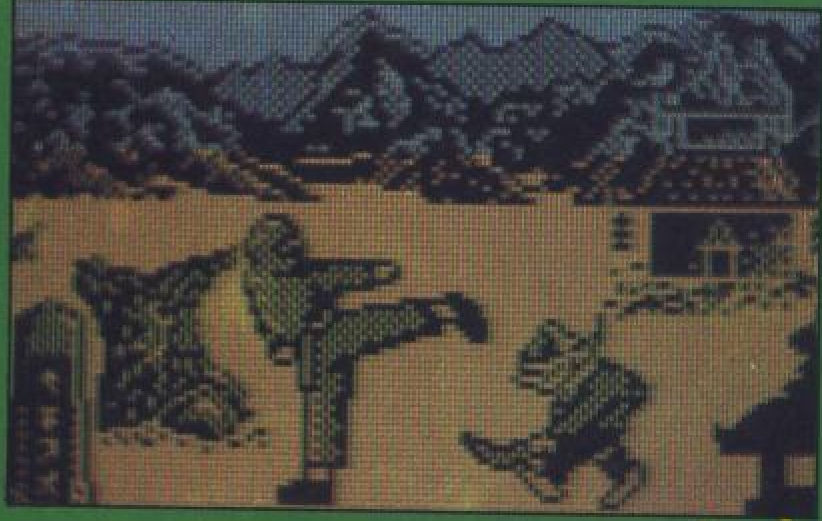
**Producer:** Kixx
**Price:** £2.99
**Original rating:** 93%

Gremlin's epic beat-'em-up was originally released in May 1986, and based on the solo-roleplaying books of the same name.

The game uses a strange 'triple scroll' effect to display the horizontally-scrolling play area. The background is split into three layers: the front layer is where the main action happens, while background effects like birds flying occur in the other two layers. This ingenious technique complements the Samurai sword-fighting. The many martial arts moves at your fighter's disposal are accessed in typical beat-'em-up style. Only by defeating all the challengers in all three levels are you elevated to the elusive status of Ninja.

All the graphics are very detailed and beautifully animated, creating a wonderful atmosphere in which the excellent beat-'em-up takes place. This is a piece of software of the highest quality and a great buy at the new low price.

***Overall*** ***88%***



varied gameplay.

As a Ninja student, you are faced with three mammoth tests of skill by your Master; unarmed combat, pole fighting, and

# BIGGLES

**Producer:** Silverbird
**Price:** £1.99
**Original rating:** 63%

Timed to coincide with the release of the movie the game was hyped to the skies, but sadly the actual game couldn't live up to it back in July 1986.

WWI flying ace Biggles has a 'time twin' living in the 1980s, called Jim. Back in 1917, the Germans have developed an awesome 'sound weapon' to win the war. Jim is 'warped' back in time to 1917 in order to help Biggles destroy the sound weapon.

*Biggles* consists of two separate games. The first has three sections, beginning with Biggles flying over enemy territory. The next section sees him and Jim warped back to the 1980s, running across London rooftops. The final section has them fighting German guards back in 1917. The other game, on the flip side of the tape, is essentially a flight simulator with the added objective of rescuing Biggles' friends.

Although disappointing at the time, *Biggles* now represents a big game for just two quid.

***Overall*** ***68%***

# YOGI BEAR

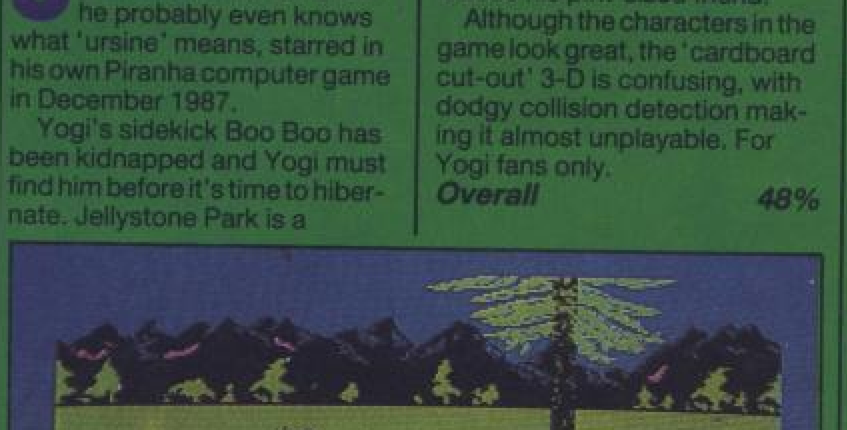
**Producer:** Alternate
**Price:** £1.99
**Original rating:** 62%

Jellystone park's famous ursine resident, so smart he probably even knows what 'ursine' means, starred in his own Piranha computer game in December 1987.

Yogi's sidekick Boo Boo has been kidnapped and Yogi must find him before it's time to hibernate. Jellystone Park is a dangerous place, with all manner of obstacles for Yogi to jump over or duck under, but there's plenty of snacks to grab too. If Yogi manages to reach the stepping stones to Boo Boo's prison, he must take the correct route to rescue his pint-sized friend.

Although the characters in the game look great, the 'cardboard cut-out' 3-D is confusing, with dodgy collision detection making it almost unplayable. For Yogi fans only.

***Overall*** ***48%***



# NIGHT GUNNER

**Producer:** Silverbird
**Price:** £1.99
**Original rating:** 91%

Another old Digital Integration classic is rolled out of the hangar doors. This was first reviewed in Issue 3 where it was Game Of The Month – CRASH Smashes had yet to be invented.

The game has you as the gunner and bombardier of a WWII Lancaster. There's thirty missions in all, each divided into three sections. In the two gunner sections you're defending the plane on its journey to, or from, the target area. Enemy fighters appear as specks in the distance, then coming sweeping in to attack, machine guns flashing. A gunsight is moved around the screen to intercept them, fail and damage builds up – sometimes jamming the gunsight!

When you arrive at the target you start your attack. Missions alternate between high-level bombing strikes (looking down on the scrolling target area) and low-level rocket attacks (flying into the screen and diving down to attack targets).

A true measure of a great game is how it stands up to the ravages of time and *Night Gunner* has certainly aged well. The sheer amount of missions, the variety of gameplay and toughness make this a formidable challenge which should keep you playing for ages. If you haven't already got it – get it now!

***Overall*** ***91%***

# CAULDRON II

**Producer:** Silverbird
**Price:** £1.99
**Original rating:** 91%

In the original *Cauldron*, the player controlled a witch fighting the evil Pumpking. In the sequel, you control a pumpkin battling against the evil witch!

The pumpkin's objective is a magic broomstick hidden in a castle populated by objects magically animated by the witch to stop intruders. Five objects hidden in the castle must also be collected and used at the right places in the game to make progress.

As in the prequel, graphics are very colourful and well-animated without too much clash. Progress is again very difficult, but excellent presentation inspires you to keep playing. 128 screens of colourful, playable action seems very good value for the budget price.

***Overall*** ***87%***

Nick Roberts's

# PLAYING TIPS



**Did you hear the one about the Irish man and the banana? No, neither did I! Oh, sorry about that, I had a sudden attack of wit. It must have been the news from the GCSE examining board that they had dropped a right clanger on my English Language results, their computer made all Cs into Ds! You can't trust anyone these days. Anyway, it shut the rest of the CRASH team up – when I said I'd got a D they laughed. It's all sorted out now, though.**

**Tips this month are really booming, there is a solution to *Samurai Warrior*; Cheat Mode Motel; Yvonne down in art has done a brilliant map of *Last Ninja 2* to go along with the solution, and the** Howdon Hackers **and** Tefal Men **have been busy with plenty of POKEs to see you through February.**

**Now to set a challenge. How about attempting to make a 3-D model of Incentive's *Total Eclipse*? If you remember, back in Lloyd's 32-page Tip Special a 3-D map was printed of *Dragon's Lair 2*, if you could draw it like that, in 2-D with little cut and paste tabs all over it, I'll choose the best one and you're sure to get a prize. So there's something to keep you occupied.**

## CHEAT MODE MOTEL

**It's time once again to open the doors on the Cheat Mode Motel and see who's staying this month. Well, we have one bloke who tends to get really *Savage* if he doesn't get his breakfast on time, and the *Mario Brothers* have got a twin suite all to themselves. Finally someone called *Renegade* is staying for the second time. So there's plenty going on in the Cheat Mode Motel.**



### SAVAGE

The codewords for the later levels are SABATTA for Level 2 and FERGUS for Level 3. The programmers have made a mistake in the program as on completing level 1 the password is spelt SABBATTA!
(occupant: **Wai Sing Man**)

### MARIO BROS

When the 128K game has started press BREAK, DELETE or EXTEND MODE and you can go to any phase you want.
(occupant: **Stuart Hodge**)




### RENEGADE

This is a different cheat from the one already printed. Apparently there is an extra move not mentioned in the instruction booklet! Have you ever been stuck between a boss and a drop, and would have liked to quickly get the big man over the edge and complete the level? Well now you can.

First, jump-kick in the direction of the drop so you have your back to the boss. When he comes near back-kick him. He should be stunned, but still upright. Quickly turn around and grab him. He will now be in a kneeing position. Knee him once just to make sure and then do a back-kick. He should go flying over your shoulder and, providing you are close enough, down the drop.
(occupant: **Chris Dand**)



# NINJA KNOWLEDGE

**Here, as promised, is the solution to all six levels of System 3's brilliant *Last Ninja 2*. Now I don't want to spoil the game for anyone – and get a sack full of complaints to Lloyd – so if you want to complete the game on your own DO NOT READ ON, resist temptation and just say 'No'!**

**Right, now all those upright, arcade adventurers have gone, all us unscrupulous, and stuck, players can thank** Jason Richardson **of Wincanton for his tips, which win him this month's £40 of software.**




*Level 1*

Go behind the curtain and punch the box which flashed as you entered. Return to the first room and fall down the open trap door, which will put you in a room with a key in it: pick this up and leave.

On the next screen leave by the bottom to find a room with a box of shurikens, take them. Go through the gap in the wall and you'll see the knife juggler, get past him and into the next room. Throw a shuriken at the man here and pick up the map, then climb the wall bars and leave by the left of the screen. Next, jump gaps and pick up pole, then jump back into the last room. Walk backwards onto the wall bars and you will climb back down, leave and go back past the juggler, in the next room leave by the right-hand exit.

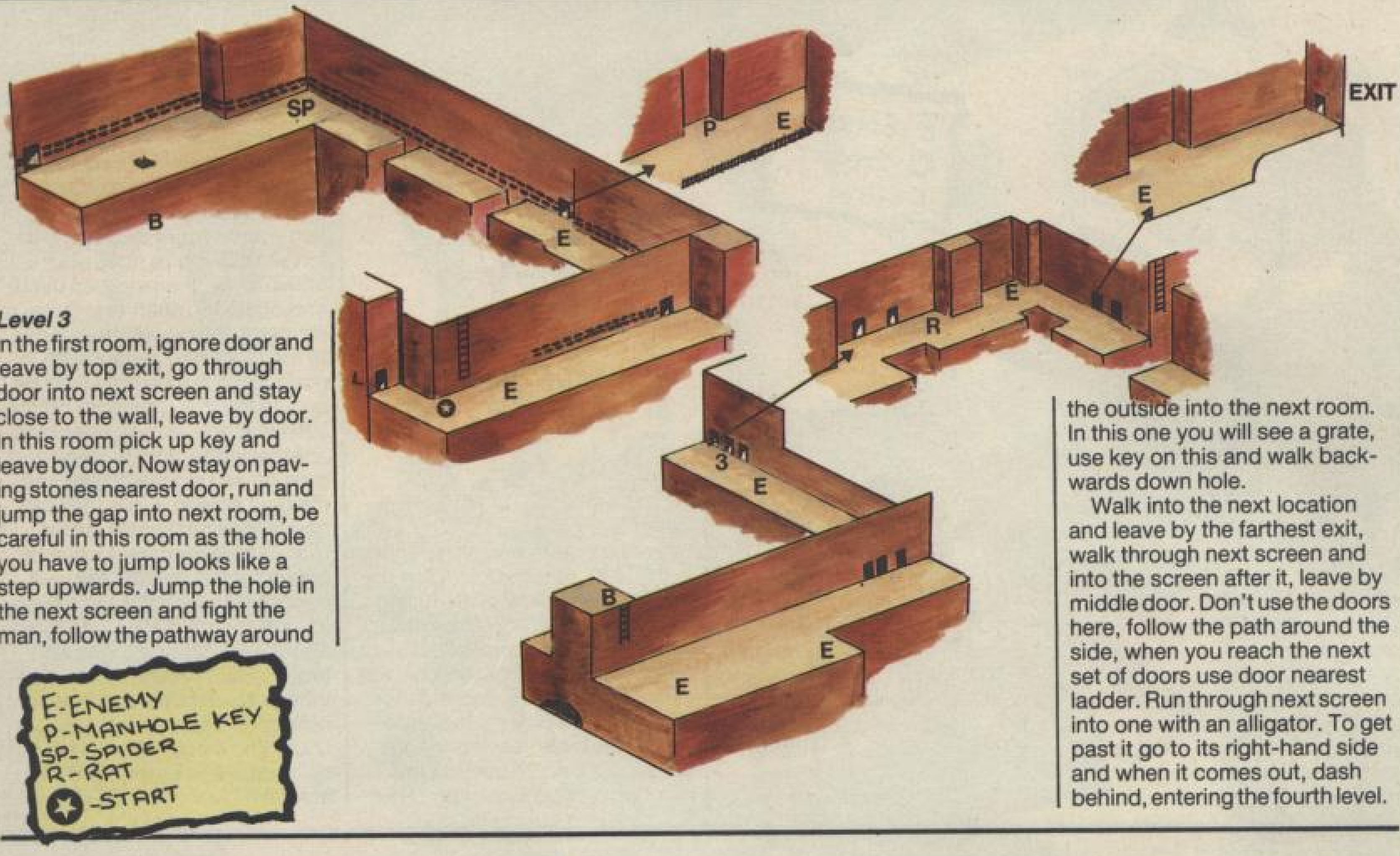
Go through the gap in the wall and be ready to throw a shuriken at a man. Pick up whilst in the women's toilets, go back to the hole in the wall and leave by the top exit. Step through the gap in the wall, throw a shuriken at the man and pick up in the women's toilets again. Go out and pick up at the hot dog stand. Leave by the top exit and you should be at the gate location, go to the middle of the gate while holding the key, pick up and exit by going through gate. Jump river by using the boat as a stepping stone – this needs practise – and leave. In the next room there are some bees, avoid these and go up the winding path. Get to the middle of the path then run and jump onto the island. Go to the bushes and poke the boat with stick, it should move away. Then get onto the bottom edge of the island, run and jump back onto the path. Now cross the river by using the boat and leave the park to access the second level.

*Level 2*

Leave by bottom exit and cross road when lights aren't flashing. Cross the road again in the next screen and run along the street for two screens. Here pick up the hamburger and go into the next location to pick up the bottle. Cross road and follow pavement around until you come to a dead end, you will see an open door, pick up while you are in this. Now retrace your steps to the 'eats' shop and cross the road here, follow the pavement around into next screen, go around corner to leave by the bottom exit. Pick up a hot dog and keep on running in the same direction, you should enter a room with a manhole cover in it. While you are holding the object from the open door, pick up when on the manhole cover and fall down the hole to access Level 3.

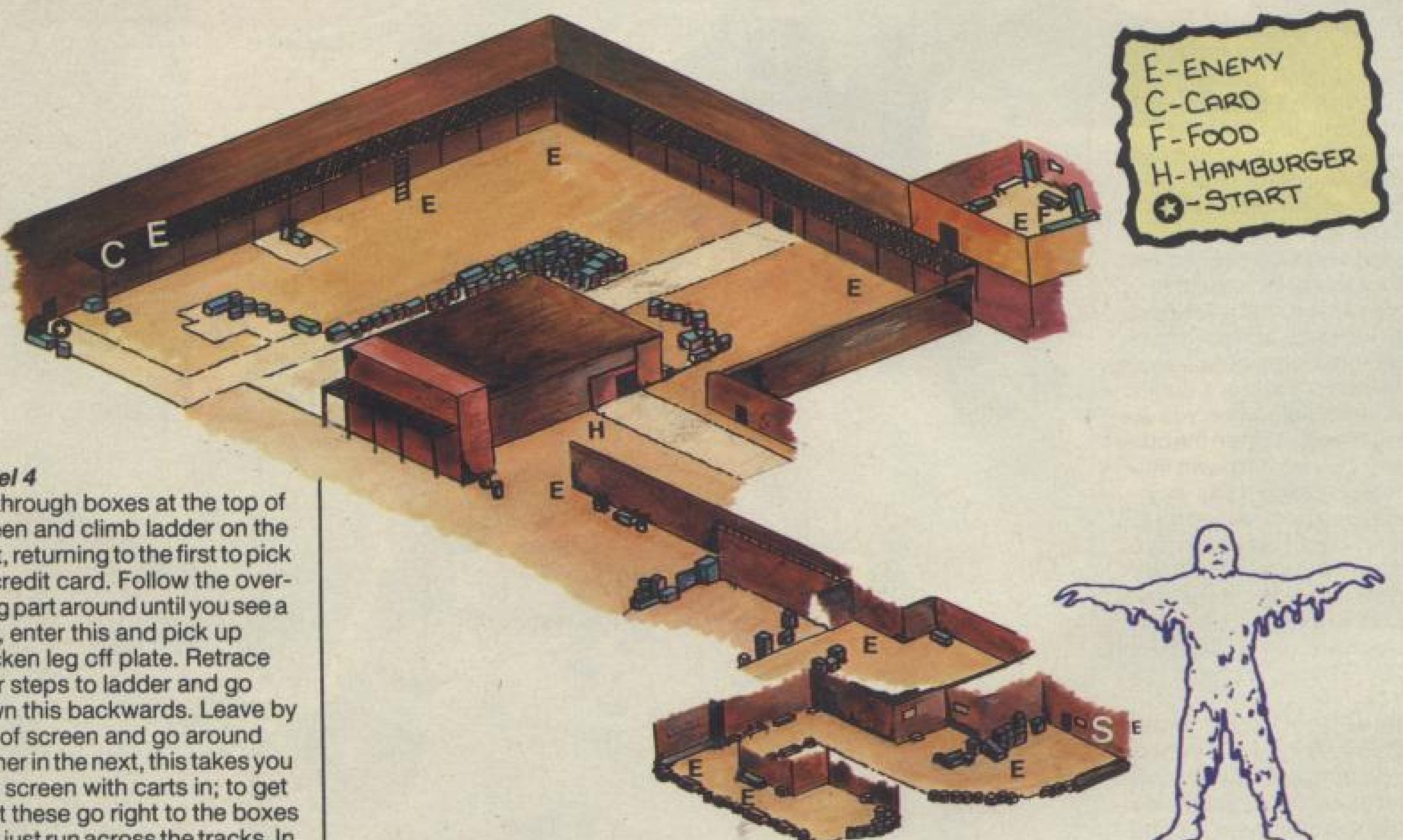



H-HAMBURGER
PT-POT THROWER
B-BOTTLE
P-MANHOLE KEY
SW-SWORD




*Level 3*
In the first room, ignore door and leave by top exit, go through door into next screen and stay close to the wall, leave by door. In this room pick up key and leave by door. Now stay on paving stones nearest door, run and jump the gap into next room, be careful in this room as the hole you have to jump looks like a step upwards. Jump the hole in the next screen and fight the man, follow the pathway around the outside into the next room. In this one you will see a grate, use key on this and walk backwards down hole.

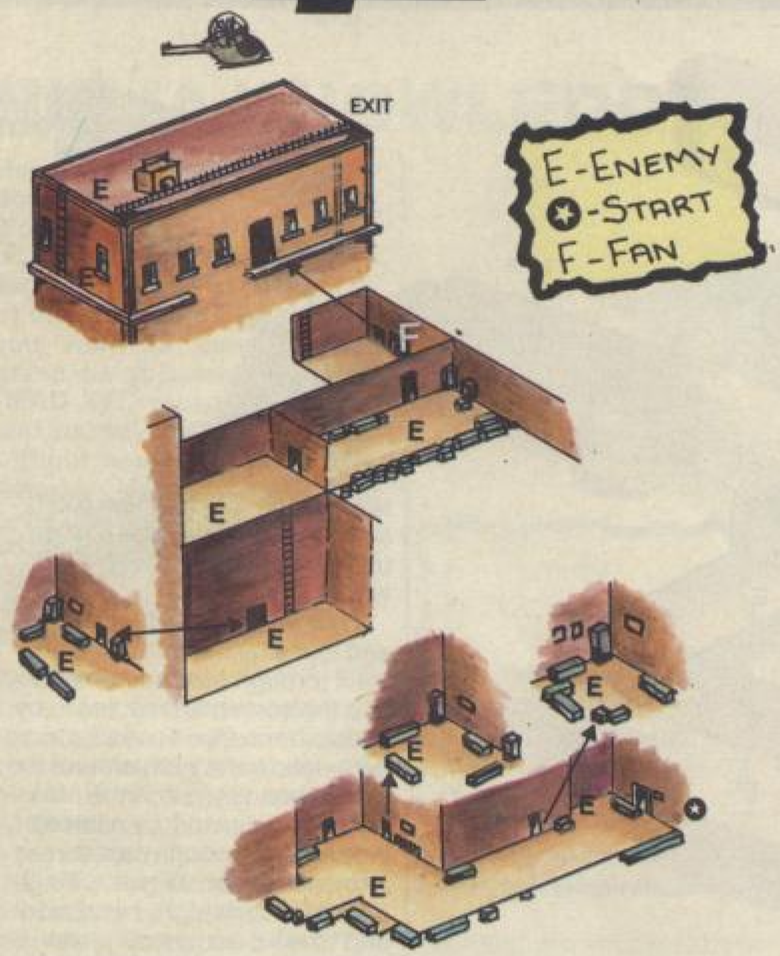
Walk into the next location and leave by the farthest exit, walk through next screen and into the screen after it, leave by middle door. Don't use the doors here, follow the path around the side, when you reach the next set of doors use door nearest ladder. Run through next screen into one with an alligator. To get past it go to its right-hand side and when it comes out, dash behind, entering the fourth level.

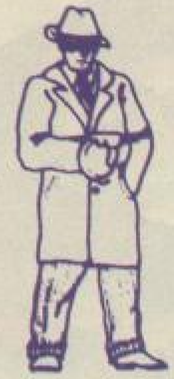



*Level 4*
Go through boxes at the top of screen and climb ladder on the next, returning to the first to pick up credit card. Follow the overhang part around until you see a gap, enter this and pick up chicken leg off plate. Retrace your steps to ladder and go down this backwards. Leave by top of screen and go around corner in the next, this takes you to a screen with carts in; to get past these go right to the boxes and just run across the tracks. In the next location go around corner into a location where you will have to jump electric wires. Walk into the next screen, go around corner and you should be in a room with pillars in it. Jump from one pillar to another until you're on the one opposite the man, move closer to him until he bursts into action, fight him.

Once you've killed him jump onto the rest of the pillars and into the next screen. Go around the box here and into the next location which should be inside a building. Leave by the right-hand side of the screen and you should see a panther in the corner. Hold chicken leg and go to the panther, when he raises his head press 'pick up' and he will start to chew. He will then get up and lunge at you – move away. The panther should have now moved forward so you can walk behind it into the next room.

Kill the woman here and hold the credit card, go to control panel on the wall and pick up, the lift should come down, get into it. Ready for Level 5 . . . ?



***Level 5***

Leave first room and enter door in the next. In this room, pick up at the computer terminal facing forward and you should be given a number. Leave and follow the corridor around until you come to a room with two doors. Enter first door and pick up the shuriken off the table, leave and enter the second. While holding the number, pick up at the computer terminal, a door will open, enter this and you will see a ladder in the next room, climb it and go through the door at the top. Go through door in the next room and you should see a giant fan. This is tricky; you have to position yourself right up close to the fan so that you're not being blown away, then move to the far end of the fan shaft and throw a shuriken, the fan will stop, move to the grate and pick up; the grate will pull away. You will be on a ledge, run and jump off the left-hand side of the screen onto another ledge, fight the man and then go around the corner into the next screen. Fight the man here and climb ladder, avoid man in next room and leave by the top of the screen. You will now see a helicopter, go to very top corner of building and move about a centimetre to the right (some good if you're monitor's a different size to mine!), face the helicopter and pick up. You should now take off with the helicopter and access the sixth and final level.

***Level 6***

Drop off the helicopter onto the nearest pillar, then jump to the pillar which is on the slanting bit of roof. Walk left onto the walkway and walk into the next screen. Fight the man here and walk backwards into the skylight, you will fall into the mansion. Do not use door in first room but walk into second and use door there. Pick up the object from the wall and return to the first room and use door now. In this room you will see a hole in the wall, this is a dumb waiter, enter hole when you are holding the object from the other wall and you will fall down into the kitchen. Doing it this way prevents you from setting off the alarm, which you would do if you went down the stairs. One last tip is that if you do set the alarm off, go to room next to kitchen and pick up at the control panel in the bookcase, this turns the alarm off.

In the hallway at the bottom of the steps look carefully behind plant, go through the door there and get through the barriers into the steam room. Open second door last and the steam will move so you can get past, walk through next room and into the room with a giant star on the floor. Pick up at the picture and this will reveal a wall safe, pick up and you will have to enter a code, this is the code from the terminal in Level 5, the orb will now be revealed.







And that's it; you're going to have to work out how to beat Kunitoki yourself!


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# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE HOWDEN HACKERS

Which hackers send in a big selection of hacks every month? Which hackers hacks always work? Yes that's right it's the Howdon Hackers of Tyne and Wear. They have got a few more +3 hacks for the Pirate compilation, POKEs for *Savage*, *Soldier of Fortune* and much more.

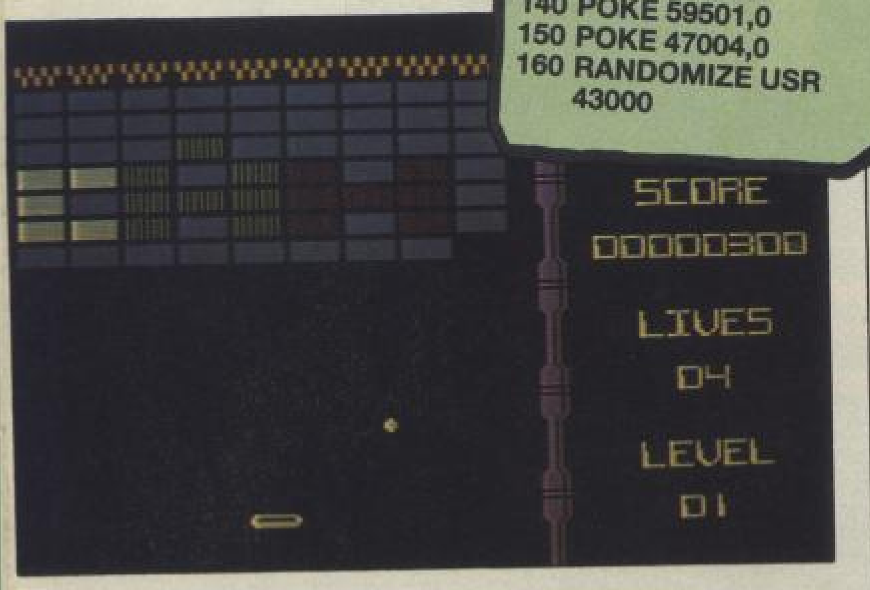
## MOTORBIKE MADNESS

```
10  REM MOTORBIKE
    MADNESS HACK
20  REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
30  REM
40  CLEAR 24830
50  LOAD ""SCREEN$
60  LOAD ""CODE
70  POKE 33314,4
80  POKE 33542,183
90  POKE 39189,183
100 POKE 34513,0
110 RANDOMIZE USR
    32765
```

## SMASHOUT

### +3 DISK

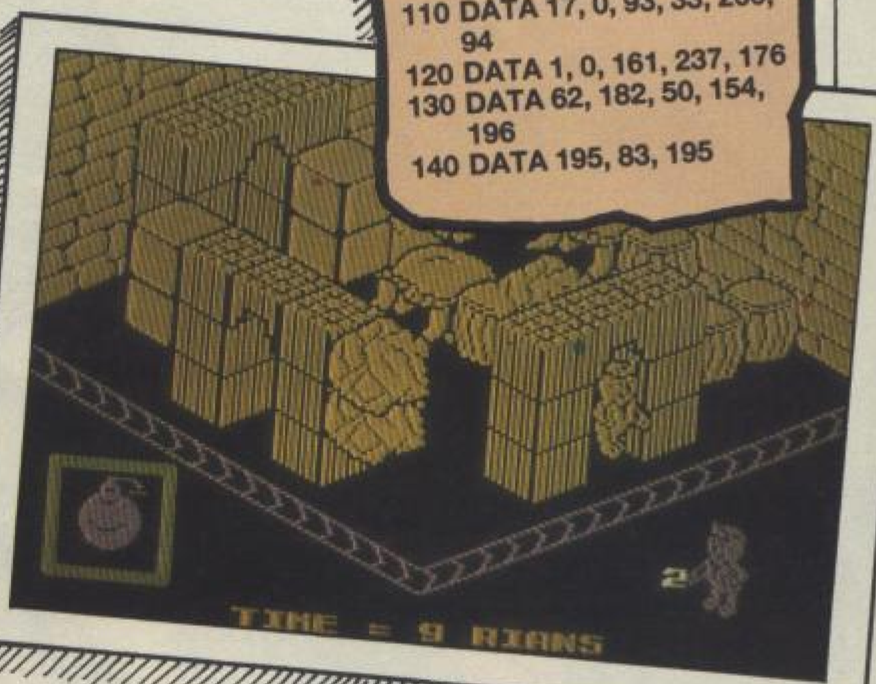
```
10  REM SMASHOUT DISK
    HACK
20  REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
30  REM
40  BORDER 0: PAPER 0:
    INK 7
50  CLEAR 32000
60  LOAD "1A"CODE
70  LOAD "1B"CODE
80  POKE 23607,227
90  POKE 23658,8
100 CLEAR 43000
110 POKE 23613,108
120 POKE 23614,232
130 POKE 59500,0
140 POKE 59501,0
150 POKE 47004,0
160 RANDOMIZE USR
    43000
```




## HOLIDAY IN SUMARIA

### +3 DISK

```
10  REM HOLIDAY IN
    SUMARIA DISK HACK
20  REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
30  REM
40  CLEAR 65535
50  LOAD "3a"CODE
60  FOR F=16384 TO 16402
70  READ A: POKE F,A:
    NEXT F
80  LOAD "3b"CODE 24264
90  POKE 23399,4: OUT
    8189,4
100 RANDOMIZE USR
    16384
110 DATA 17, 0, 93, 33, 200,
    94
120 DATA 1, 0, 161, 237, 176
130 DATA 62, 182, 50, 154,
    196
140 DATA 195, 83, 195
```




## CALL ME PSYCHO

### +3 DISK

```
10  REM CALL ME PSYCHO
    DISK HACK
20  REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
30  REM
40  POKE 23693,0
50  POKE 23624,0
60  CLEAR 25830
70  LOAD "2a"CODE
80  LOAD "2b"CODE
90  POKE 48050,0
100 RANDOMIZE USR
    41900
```



# FIREBIRDS GALORE!

For fans of the Tefal Men's Firebird loader, here are a few more data lines from the Howdon Hackers for you to bolt on to the end. I've reprinted the loader if you missed it last time around.

## SAVAGE – LEVEL 1

```
250 REM SAVAGE–LEVEL 1
260 REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
270 REM
300 DATA 62, 183, 50, 181,
    146
301 DATA 50, 216, 228, 50,
    129
302 DATA 153, 50, 151, 153,
    50
303 DATA 176, 224, 195, 156,
    99
304 DATA 3122
310 POKE 40612,18
320 POKE 40613,93
330 POKE 40615,187
340 POKE 40616,93
350 POKE 40625,187
360 POKE 40626,93
370 POKE 40628,25
380 IF T=12000 THEN GOTO
    130
390 PRINT "DATA
    ERROR!": STOP
```

## SAVAGE – LEVEL 2

```
250 REM SAVAGE–LEVEL 2
260 REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
270 REM
300 DATA 62, 183, 50, 152,
    127
301 DATA 195, 188, 102
302 DATA 4765
310 POKE 40612,18
320 POKE 40613,93
330 POKE 40615,187
340 POKE 40616,93
350 POKE 40625,187
360 POKE 40626,93
370 POKE 40628,10
380 IF T=12000 THEN GOTO
    130
390 PRINT "DATA
    ERROR!": STOP
```

## SAVAGE – LEVEL 3

```
250 REM SAVAGE–LEVEL 3
260 REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
270 REM
300 DATA 62, 183, 50, 248,
    225
301 DATA 50, 63, 226, 195,
    144
302 DATA 101, 4277
310 POKE 40612,18
320 POKE 40613,93
330 POKE 40615,187
340 POKE 40616,93
350 POKE 40625,187
360 POKE 40626,93
370 POKE 40628,15
380 IF T=12000 THEN GOTO
    130
390 PRINT "DATA
    ERROR!": STOP
```

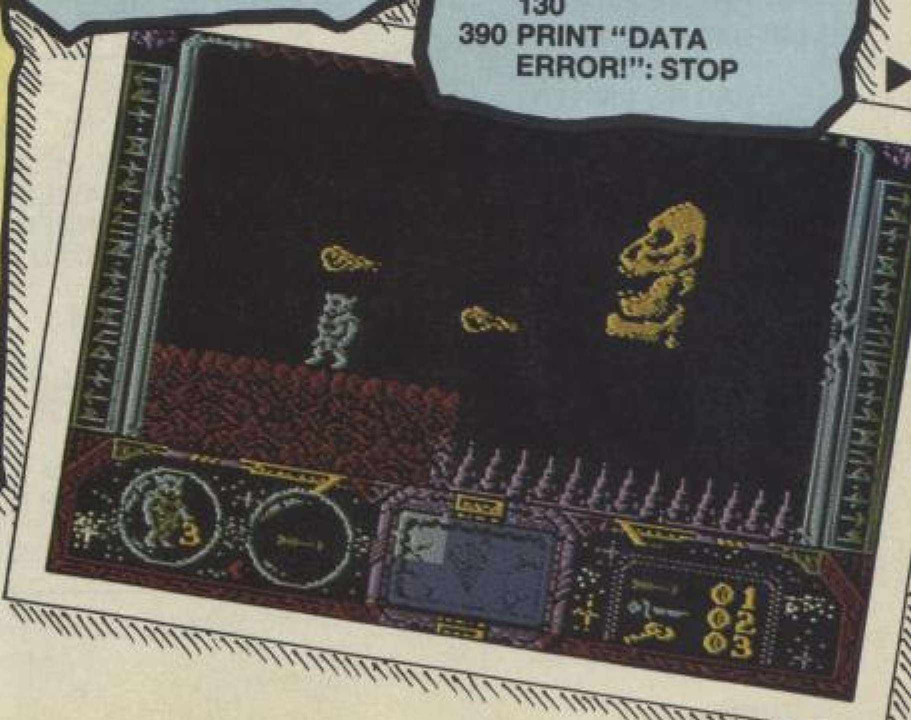


## FIREBIRD LOADER

```
10  REM FIREBIRD
    LOADER
20  REM BY THE TEFAL
    MEN
30  FOR F=40192 TO 40448
40  POKE F,158: NEXT F
50  LET T=0
60  FOR F=40599 TO 1e9
70  READ A
80  LET T=T+A
90  IF A>255 THEN GO TO
    310
100 POKE F,A
110 NEXT F
120 IF T<>9000 THEN
    PRINT "ERROR IN
    DATA": STOP
130 PRINT AT 10,10;"START
    TAPE"
140 RANDOMIZE USR
    40599
150 LOAD ""
160 DATA 62, 157, 237, 71,
    237, 94
170 DATA 201, 229, 213, 197,
    245
180 DATA 175, 50, 18, 91, 58,
    0
190 DATA 91, 254, 195, 32,
    18, 33
200 DATA 197, 158, 17, 0, 91,
    1
210 DATA 18, 0, 237, 176, 62,
    63
220 DATA 237, 71, 237, 86,
    243, 241
230 DATA 193, 209, 225, 255,
    201
300 REM BOLT ON GAME
    DATA LINE HERE
```

## SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

```
250 REM SOLDIER OF
    FORTUNE
260 REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
270 REM
300 DATA 151, 50, 99, 182,
    195
301 DATA 247, 102
302 DATA 4798
310 POKE 40612,18
320 POKE 40613,93
330 POKE 40615,187
340 POKE 40616,93
350 POKE 40625,187
360 POKE 40626,93
370 POKE 40628,10
380 IF T=12000 THEN GOTO
    130
390 PRINT "DATA
    ERROR!": STOP
```



# FLASHBACK

**Wow, what a Flashback I've got for all you lovers of the older game this month. All thanks to one man,** Craig Davies **of Blackpool. Having just completed his A-levels he was faced with hours of spare time, so Craig decided to spend it hacking all his old software collection, and why not? He's sent in so many POKEs that they should keep Flashback going for a few months to come.**

### ACTION BIKER

```
1   REM ACTION BIKER HACK
2   REM BY CRAIG DAVIES
10  POKE 23693,63: CLEAR 65535
20  FOR N=65000 TO 65027: READ A: POKE N,A: NEXT N
30  DATA 221, 33, 0, 64, 17, 108, 27, 62, 255, 55, 205, 86, 5, 210, 96, 234
40  DATA 33, 0, 91, 17, 0, 118, 1, 108, 0, 237, 176, 201
50  PRINT AT 10,4; INK 0;"START ACTION BIKER TAPE"
60  RANDOMIZE USR 60000
70  LET A=30298
80  READ B: IF B<>999 THEN POKE A,B: LET A=A+1: GOTO 80
90  RANDOMIZE USR 30220
100 DATA 175, 50, 127, 217, 50, 82, 239: REM INFINITE SLEEP POINTS
110 DATA 62, 201, 50, 111, 218: REM INFINITE FUEL
120 DATA 175, 50, 50, 220: REM INFINITE TIME
130 DATA 175, 50, 51, 217, 50, 52, 217: REM NO COLLISION WITH CARS
140 DATA 175, 50, 37, 239, 50, 38, 239: REM OIL HAS NO EFFECT
150 DATA 62, 3, 50, 22, 219: REM ABLE TO SEE IN THE DARK
160 DATA 175, 50, 30, 254, 50, 31, 254: REM NO BORING TUNES
170 DATA 175, 50, 209, 253, 50, 210, 253: REM MESSAGES SCROLL QUICKER
180 DATA 33, 174, 226, 229, 17, 24, 30, 221, 33, 0, 91, 62, 255, 55, 195, 86, 5, 201, 999: REM END MARKER
```

### FRED

```
1   REM FRED HACK
2   REM BY CRAIG DAVIES
10  POKE 23693,0: BORDER 0
20  FOR N=60000 TO 60025: READ A: POKE N,A: NEXT N
30  CLS: PRINT AT 10,9; INK 7;"START THE TAPE"
40  RANDOMIZE USR 60000
50  DATA 221, 33, 0, 64, 17, 46, 120
60  DATA 62, 255, 55, 205, 86, 5
70  DATA 210, 96, 234, 175, 50, 195
80  DATA 121, 50, 97, 147
90  DATA 195, 77, 118
```

### FAHRENHEIT 3000

```
1   REM FAHRENHEIT 3000 HACK
2   REM BY CRAIG DAVIES
3   REM INFINITE LIVES
10  POKE 23693,127: BORDER 0
20  CLEAR 29923: LOAD ""CODE 23296
30  LOAD ""SCREEN$: PRINT AT 13,0;:LOAD ""CODE 29924
40  POKE 30818,0: RANDOMIZE USR 29924
```

### S.O.S.

```
1   REM S.O.S. HACK
2   REM BY CRAIG DAVIES
10  POKE 23693,7: BORDER 0: CLEAR 26617: LOAD ""CODE
20  POKE 33951,0: REM INFINITE LIVES
30  POKE 33091,0: POKE 35238,0: REM INFINITE ENERGY
40  POKE 34764,201: REM PERPETUAL DAYLIGHT
50  RANDOMIZE USR 32768
```

# SAMURAI WORRIED!

**A few tips from** Neil Pollard **of Peterborough to help on your panda patrols in Firebird's** *Samurai Warrior*.

**1** Just walk along to the right, and don't bother to go onto another path – this will give you the most chance of gaining lots of Karma.

**2** When you enter a house, don't draw your sword. There are never any enemies inside. Never gamble if you only have one Ryo left – lose it and you can't buy vital food. Don't waste time trying to bow to the other rabbit, he just stands there.

**3** Where you are challenged to a duel, go to far left of the screen and draw your sword, holding down fire so that it is lifted above Usagi's head, and release it when your opponent has covered ⅔ of the distance between you. Whatever happens, don't kill him because you will lose Karma.

**4** Later on in the game, some of the other characters are ninja in disguise. So, after you've bowed to somebody, turn around to face them as they leave the screen, and be ready to draw your sword. This should save many lost hit points due to surprise attacks.

**5** If an opponent disappears whilst you are fighting him, continuously turn left and right to be ready for him when he returns. Some ninja appear out of thin air in the first place – you just have to learn where they are and be ready for them. They will always try to get behind you.

**6** In the final level, you will appear inside a building with light streaming in through a gap in the wall. Draw your sword and don't put it away, because there are nothing but enemies in here. As soon as an opponent appears, don't run too far to the right. If you do, you will get more than one opponent on the screen, which is very difficult. All the time, watch out for ninja appearing behind you. Eventually you will reach the panda who is at the end of the section. He is about half your height and looks a bit pathetic. Be careful not to kill him. Bow to him and leave to the right. You have now finished the game.



### ROCKMAN

```
1   REM ROCKMAN HACK
2   REM BY CRAIG DAVIES
10  POKE 23693,0: BORDER 0: CLEAR 24999
20  PRINT AT 10,9; INK 7;"START THE TAPE": POKE 23606,24: POKE 23607,120: POKE 23658,8
30  LOAD ""SCREEN$: FOR A+0 TO 1: PRINT AT 17,0;: LOAD ""CODE : NEXT A
40  POKE 56332,0: REM INFINITE LIVES
50  POKE 52549,0: REM INFINITE TIME
60  POKE 40051,N: REM STARTING LEVEL (N+1-20)
70  POKE 46353,0: REM IMMOBILISE NASTIES
80  FOR N+39990 TO 39997: READ A: POKE N,A: NEXT N
90  DATA 81, 65, 79, 80, 77, 83, 48, 32
100 RANDOMIZE USR 34000
```

**Well, I'm afraid that's it for this month but don't worry, I'll be back again next month with another action-packed plethora of POKEs, tips and maps. Don't forget to have a go at that** *Total Eclipse* **map (a few POKEs on it wouldn't go amiss either because I can't get anywhere!). The address is . . .**

**NICK 'SMOKIN' ROBERTS, Playing Tips, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**

*Emlyn Hughes*



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# TECH NICHE



# LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

**All the cold weather's frozen the swamp down at the motel and JON BATES is saddened that he can no longer watch the cars bubble and pop their way under it. Still it hasn't affected his activities at the motel, the showers are running freely and no doubt the guests will be too . . .**

**IAN WEBSTER** has come all the way from Kettering in Northants and has a tip for all RAM *Music Machine* users. He can load individual sounds created on his own A1 sampler into the *Music Machine*. Working with a Microdrive he reckons that sample data from any machine can be reloaded into the *Music Machine*. The method goes like this . . . Load and run the *Music Machine*, then delete all the sample data. Enter the sample page and give it a name for a new sample. Manually trigger the sampler without a signal present at the input. This will have the effect of filling the memory space with nothing! Quit the sample page and return to BASIC via the main menu. Load from the Microdrive your previously saved sample data, and to be on the safe side load it to 47000, making sure that the data doesn't exceed the amount of free memory. Re-enter *Music Machine* by a GOTO 30 command and enter the Edit page. You should now see your new data implanted into the previously blank sample. Trim the front and back and Ian reckons you should have a sample in there.

## *TANDY ISN'T DANDY*

**AK Battock** from Maidstone, Kent is one of several guests who has left behind complaints about the Z codes and the complexity of understanding MIDI from the user manual of whatever instrument you happen to be using. Well, first of all you can play up to eight voices simultaneously from the MIDI out on the Spectrum +2, provided of course that the instrument that you have hooked up to is capable of doing so in the first place. You pick the channel you want to use by including the letter Y followed by the channel number. The Z prefix indicates that what follows is a MIDI decimal code. As some of the codes are several decimal numbers, prefix each one by the Z code. If you want a fuller understanding of MIDI codes and how they work there is a veritable industry of literature that has been issued on this subject – libraries are often good sources. To be honest, the majority of books on the subject are all pretty good at explaining the basics. The codes can be a source of merriment, though, as sometimes they are quoted in

**'Sample data from any machine can be loaded into *MM*'**

hex and sometimes in decimal. Borrow a conversion table or scientific calculator.

You also ask about controlling the percussion set. With a bit of luck, the percussion department on your keyboard will be preset on a MIDI channel and each drum will have a particular note number assigned to it. No Z codes required. You mention that you have Tandy MIDI cables. Whilst they are OKish, I have found that when mother and myself hook up all our gear, the aforementioned brand of cables are not the best conductors of MIDI data. I reckon that there is too much resistence in the wire, and that they're really just good old-fashioned five pin audio leads brought out of hibernation for a new lease of life and some outlandish profits. It's

**'You can play up to eight voices simultaneously'**

definitely Cabin One for them when they check in!

## *SPECCY SWAPPING*

Another beginner on the MIDI stakes is **Martin Wheeler** from Strood, Kent who has an XRI interface plus sequencing and Casio editing software. He has the unfortunate problem of either or both programs locking up. Long distance diagnosis is not our forte, but it could be that your MIDI cables are running too close to the monitor and scrambling the data due to the

**'Maybe the interface is having premature senility'**

magnetic field surrounding the cathode ray tube. On the other hand I seem to recall that the really early editions of the XRI ▶

Casio editing software had hiccups that were sorted out quite quickly. Maybe the interface itself is second-hand and is having premature senility. It is unlikely that it is due to your lack of knowledge about MIDI programming that this is occurring. In short, try to eliminate all possibilities; swap Speccies with a mate, rearrange the cable layout, see if you can borrow some XRI software and maybe another interface until the cause manifests itself. If it is your software then contact XRI.

Well, that's just about it for this month. Till next month, watch out for shadows on the shower curtains . . .

Bates motel.

**GUEST LIST**

*Ian Webster, Kettering, Northants.*
*A.K. Battock, Maidstone, Kent.*
*Martin Wheeler, Strood, Kent.*
*Michael Carter, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.*

# TECH Tips



**Almost a year since CRASH's first in-depth look at the SAM, MGT invited the press down to their new Swansea headquarters for a comprehensive briefing and a look at the production prototype. IAN CULL was there and explains why MGT might be onto a winner.**

# £150 SUPERCOMPUTER?

## MGT turbocharge 8-bit computing

**MILES GORDON** Technology is a company with a purpose. According to their PR, the company was formed – just two years ago – with the express purpose of developing a high-quality, user entry-level computer. Amstrad's dismantling of Sinclair Research at that time certainly ended rumours of a Super Spectrum, leaving a gap for an innovative, British computer developer.

MGT, by contrast, have plans to create a whole new series of computers. Much as the ill-fated Enterprise before it, SAM promises superior capabilities and upward compatibility so that you can uprate your base machine, rather than having to throw it away, for additional features. Unlike the Enterprise, SAM is compatible with a large amount of existing Spectrum software (about 80%) and is deliberately starting with a small production run, and high quality control, to avoid Sinclair's notorious problems.

To further ensure the machine's success it has been designed with an eye to education requirements. Both the cheap price and a built-in networking facility mean it should be highly attractive in this area. To keep costs down, and reliability good, the chip count has been kept low. This ease of manufacturing is also useful for licensed production abroad. An Indian manufacturer has already been signed up, not only to produce for the massive Indian market, but for the UK as well.

At first SAM will be available only through MGT's well-established mail order department, but there are plans to expand into the high street. MGT are aiming for sales of 56,000 in the first year, about half of them in the UK.

Possibly the most interesting aspect of SAM is its use of an 8-bit Z80B processor, when both Atari and Commodore have gone firmly for 16-bit technology. MGT's reasons for this involve low cost and the long experience software houses have with the Z80. As a result, MGT expect to have a lot of software available at launch. Moreover SAM's Z80 chip will be running at 6 MHz, compared to 4 Mhz for the Spectrum.

### 'SAM will positively bristle with interfaces'

Most of the development work on SAM has revolved around the design of a custom Fujitsu ULA chip. This relatively advanced chip will contain all the circuitry developed using around 130 individual ICs. Production SAMs will thus have just seven chips – Z80B microprocessor, 32K ROM, 256K RAM in two chips, six-channel stereo sound chip, 64-colour TV modulator chip and the ASIC itself. It will also be possible to add an additional 256K RAM and one or two disk drives – these are a new ultra-thin Citizen design, and will mount in the front of the computer *under* the keyboard!

The basic SAM will positively bristle with interfaces. There's a standard Sinclair joystick interface, a mouse port, monitor and TV outputs, audio output, MIDI In and Out connectors (the Out can double as Thru), printer (serial or parallel will be supported using an 'intelligent' cable), light pen input and cassette. There is also a full expansion connector. On top of that there's a 71 key keyboard with 'soft' key definitions, allowing any key to be a function key beside the 10 function keys available.

At the heart of all this there's the ROM, written by Dr Andy Wright, the author of Spectrum *Beta Basic*. Anyone who has

used *Beta Basic* should therefore be assured that the SAM is going to be a 'good machine'. It will still be a Basic computer, but will have letter-by-letter entry (rather than the 48K Spectrum keyword system). There will also be a built-in Disk Operating System similar to the Plus D DOS, but able to handle random access files.

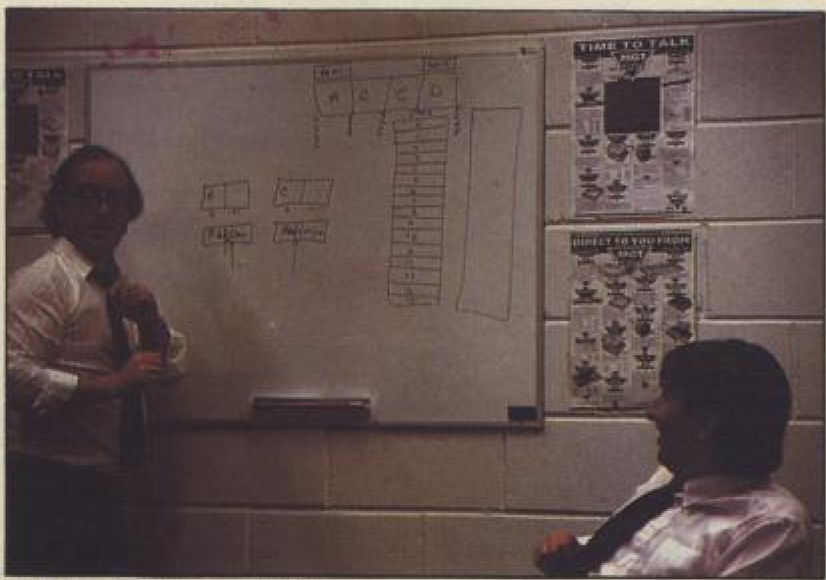
## 'Mode 2 is a 'Super Spectrum' screen'

The performance all this hardware offers is pretty impressive. On the sound front the Philips chip has six channels (the Amiga has only four) which can output through headphones or hi-fi, as well as the TV. However, the screen graphics are where the computer will really shine. There are 64 colours available, accessable via the colour look-up table. There are four modes available.

Mode 1 is a Spectrum screen – eight colours with bright and flash, with 8x8 attributes (hence colour clash) on a 256x192 pixel display. However, the eight colours need not be original Spectrum ones – any of the 64 can be selected.

Mode 2 is a 'Super Spectrum' screen – the same 256x192 pixels with separate attributes, but having a separate attribute byte for each 8x1 pixels on screen – thus eight times as many different colours can be onscreen at once. This mode also enhances the normal Spectrum display by re-ordering the pixels so that they run sensibly from top to bottom (rather than jumping in thirds as the normal Spectrum does now). Anyone who has tried to write machine code display routines will realise the significance of this.

Mode 3 offers the same 256x192 pixels – but each pixel can be *individually* set to one of 16 colours, selected from the 64 colour palette. This is the mode that will be used by art programs etc. Since 24K of RAM is needed, it may be too slow for games programs.



▲ Bruce Gordon explaining memory pages to Alan Miles on the right



▲ A cardboard mock-up of the designer computer casing

Mode 4 is a text screen, offering 512x192 pixels. Each pixel can be one of four colours, but having 512 pixels across the screen allows a readable 80 character display.

One powerful feature of the screen palette is that it can be altered very quickly. So, using interrupts, it would be possible to change the 16 colours in use by Mode 3 while the screen is being displayed – this would give access to the full 64 colours at once (a similar technique to the Spectrum Rainbow Processor, but easier to implement). The SAM Coupé can even change screen modes part-way down the screen – allowing adventure games to have a very hi-res picture of the location, with 80 column text below for description. It's also possible to change the location of screen memory by altering a single register (so a number of screens can be instantly displayed).

## 'Multitasking would be quite easy and very fast'

The memory paging system is also an innovation (especially when compared with the 128K Spectrum's system). The Z80 processor can only access 64K of memory – so even with 32K of ROM and up to 512K of RAM, the Coupé can only use 64K, without special hardware. The SAM Coupé architecture splits the Z80 memory map into four 16K blocks - A (memory addresses hex 0000 . . . 3FFF), B, C and D (hex C000 . . . FFFF). The ROM is split into two halves – one can be brought in over block A (holding BASIC code) and one over block D (holding DOS).

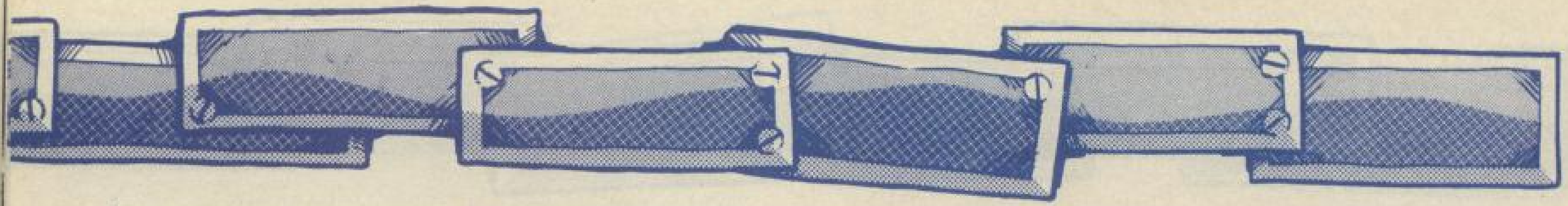
There are two 8-bit registers in the hardware, which can be used to select which 16K pages of RAM from the 256K (or 512K on an expanded SAM Coupé) are to be accessible by the Z80. Reglo selects which page is accessible through block A. The hardware *automatically* makes the next page available through block B. Similarly, Reghi does the same for blocks C and D.

This may sound complex, but gives two major benefits. The first is that a complete, new 64K memory map can be brought in with one machine code instruc-




▲ Miles and Gordon with The Nick Holland Design Group's design

▶



tion, writing to Reglo and Reghi at once (as a 16-bit word). Multitasking (of up to four programs at once) would therefore be quite easy and very fast. The second benefit is that it will be possible to write programs that can use the full available memory! If all memory is accessed via blocks C & D using a memory pointer, then any 32K can be accessed as a normal paging mechanism would bring in the next page – *losing* the current block D contents. This makes handling information which crosses the boundary very difficult.

The SAM system, however, makes the problem nonexistent. Incrementing the Reghi value will effectively shift the memory in block D down to the block C area, and bring in the next page to block D. Now the pointer can be reduced by 16K (a simple machine code subtraction) and it is then *still* pointing to the same information (though now at address BFFF). The following page is now available, but so is the previous data.

Another feature of the SAM Coupé is that all the ROM code can be de-selected (giving an all RAM machine) and memory A can be write-protected. This allows a new ROM to be loaded into block A then locked, preventing corruption by rogue programs.

## 'Many existing Spectrum games can be loaded in and run without problems'

This brings us to the facility of the SAM Coupé to emulate a Spectrum. The Mode 1 screen already gives the same screen format as the Spectrum. The Coupé also has hardware circuits to emulate the Spectrum BEEP command. By loading in a tape copy of a Spectrum 48K ROM to memory block A, then write protecting it, the result is a computer which behaves very like a 48K ZX Spectrum, but running faster than normal (with the possibility of choosing a new palette of colours, too).

This feature of the SAM Coupé will mean that many existing Spectrum games can be run without problems (the Coupé even emulates the ULA feature used in games like *Arkanoid*, and omitted by Amstrad in their +3 and +2A). The Coupé will not be able to run 128K games – but its more elegant memory addressing a vastly superior sound may mean the death of the 128K Spectrum in favour of SAM!

## 'Some form of snapshot will be built into SAM'

Miles Gordon Technology are trying very hard to create a new, very customer-orientated computer market. The SAM Coupé can take hardware add-ons in much the same way as the Spectrum does (indeed, some Spectrum add-ons can be used with the Coupé) but a proper edge connector will mean the end of RAM pack wobbles! MGT are also making an expansion frame (reminiscent of the Gordon Microframe) for 'power users'. In addition MGT will try to control add-on manufacturers so that hardware clashes are avoided – I/O port locations will be allocated to each manufacturer. Some form of snapshot will also be built in, allowing tape-based users upgrading to disk to transfer their games without hassle.

One other point worth making is that, while we have not yet been told what the rest of the SAM series will consist of, MGT assure us there *will* be an upgrade – no more 'throwaway' computers. My suspicion (based on Alan Miles' comment that the Coupé is taking 8-bit technology 'as far as it can go') is that a new processor will be used in later models. Perhaps the Coupé will simply be a keyboard, screen and disk interface for some faster processor (much like the old Acorn/BBC tube design) . . .

**As the SAM Coupé comes nearer to being on the market, CRASH will continue to monitor its progress – it is hoped that a pre-production will be available by the end of February. In the meantime expect the delayed Version 2 *DICE* review and much more besides. Letters pleading for SAMs should be addressed to MGT, Lakeside, Pheonix Way, Swansea SA7 9EH, (☎ 0792 791100). Everything else can be sent to** Ian Cull, Tech Niche, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB. **See ya . . .**

# OUT OF THE LIGHT

## AND INTO THE DARKNESS WITH A TRIP TO FINLAND!

## TOTAL ECLIPSE

returns for another competition.

No-one can bribe the Comps Minion, but the prize was so good we couldn't resist.

Hands up those clever bods among you who know when the next total Solar Eclipse will be happening? Did I hear the 22 July 1990? No, didn't think so, but that's the date. And the place? Finland. Now that's a fair few miles away, so Incentive will fly the **two first-prize winners** there (better pack your winter woolies) and insulate their wallets/purses with **£100 of spending money**.

If you would like to have the trip of a lifetime, visiting Finland, just answer the questions below, stick your answers in the nearest post box. All postcards must reach us by March 2, and the usual rules and regulations apply. You'll be competing for this fab prize against readers of THE GAMES MACHINE and ZZAP, so hurry up and get those correct entries in. Send 'em off to . . . **I'M BLINDED BY THE LIGHT, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**

**1 Who are the authors of *Total Eclipse*?**
**a) Minor Developments;**
**b) Mini Developments;**
**c) Major Developments.**

**2 In which year is the game set?**
**a) 1920;**
**b) 1930;**
**c) 1940.**

**3 Who is the Egyptian Sun-god?**
**a) Re;**
**b) Ra;**
**c) Horus.**

CRASH COMPETITION

# GAGNER UN SÉJOUR À PARIS!

## *OR EVEN WIN A HOLIDAY IN PARIS!!*



### *SKATEBALL*

the violent new game from the French-based software house **Ubisoft**, bears more than a passing resemblance to the film *Rollerball*. Set in the future it has two-a-side teams engaged in brutal and gladiatorial combat which usually ends due to lack of players rather than completing the full nine rounds. To set up this competition I thought that I'd better brush up on my French before speaking to our continental cousins. For days I wandered around the Towers with phrase books – much to the amusement of the CRASH team – practising on anyone who wasn't fast enough to run in the opposite direction (usually Lloyd).

After a while even Lloyd knew how to avoid me, though, so I had to lock myself into the cupboard and practise my verbs and nouns on Tiddles, at least he seemed to understand what I was saying. But when I had at last plucked up the courage to phone Ubisoft in France I found that their English was much better than my French. They explained the details of the competition and the prizes on offer.

The comp is open to all CRASH readers and there are fifty prizes on offer. The first is a **weekend for two in Paris**, with either a free day pass to the Science and Technology museum or, depending on availability, a free ticket to a sports event in Bercy, or even a free riverboat trip down the River Seine (some folks can never make up their minds). Another nine people will receive an **Ubisoft T-shirt**, whilst a further forty people will get a bag filled with a variety of **Ubisoft goodies** (clocks, pencils, posters).

Answer the following four questions, and you could be the lucky winner of either the weekend break, a T-shirt, or the old junk that Ubisoft no longer want and have thrown out (only kidding, folks). Send all entries to us by March 2, and no cheating or we will send Inspector Clouseau to sort you out. The address is, as per usual, **GET YOUR SKATES ON, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**

**1) Which two sports does *Skateball* resemble?**
**2) Who main-starred in the movie *Rollerball*?**
**3) In which city do Ubisoft have their headquarters?**
**4) Which famous French leader did the fictional 'Jackal' attempt to assassinate?**

CRASH COMPETITION







● ***Capcom in acid house shocker!***

Producer **GO!/Capcom**
Trippin' out **£8.99 cass**
**£12.99 disk**
Author **Probe**

**G**et down to the groovy, Acid House beat with this Oriental beat-'em-up. Tory MP Ivan Aston-Martin claims 'It's a disgrace!' (are you sure about this? – Ed) although Capcom claim the use of the infamous Smiley logo to represent lives is totally innocent.

In ancient China the ruthless Ryu Ken Oh has kidnapped some defenceless children ('It's a disgrace' – Rt Hon Aston-Martin). Martial arts expert Lee Wong sets off to rescue the kiddies. At first he has only an axe, but can exchange it for more useful weapons, like spears and sickles, by hitting special urns.

A mixture of horizontally-scrolling levels and small rooms must be completed before you meet Mr Oh himself. Some of these are populated by hordes of sword-swinging minions, while others contain more ruthless opponents which can kill with a single blow. Some extra-large baddies can grab Lee and throw him for a fatal fall.

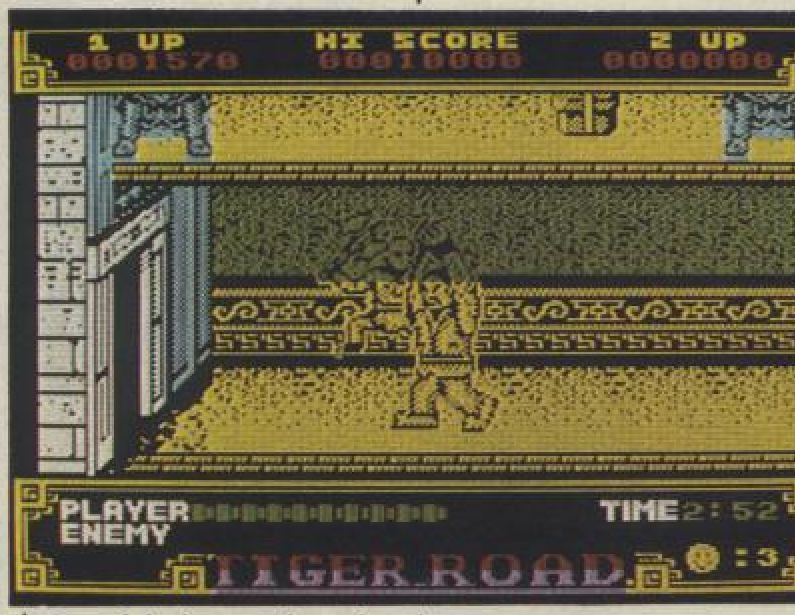
Animation of the fighters is very basic – no matter where you hit an opponent, the 'hit' always shows up on his neck. Colour is also used only in layers across the screen, although this is far better than monochrome. Nonetheless, the game has a sloppy appearance – the one vertically-scrolling level is appalling (the hero just floats upwards as decapitated dragons' heads chase him).

Gameplay is also poor, simply consisting of bashing baddie after baddie. Even the larger opponents can be easily despatched by repetitive slashing ('Disgusting!' – Mrs Whitehouse). Still, allegations that playing this at 2am, while sniffing smelly socks, produces hallucinations have been tested and proved totally false.

**PHIL 45%**

**MARK There's a fair variety of aggressive opponents with different attack methods, quite a few different weapons to deal with them and a passable tune. Unfortunately the largely monochromatic graphics are poorly drawn and move jerkily. Given the complete lack of originality, the repetitive gameplay and the ease with which it is completed this seems something of a waste of time. While not a terrible game, it has little to attract potential buyers.**

**49%**




▲ **One of the houses along the way with irate resident**

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 47% |
| Graphics | 45% |
| Sound | 50% |
| Playability | 49% |
| Addictive qualities | 44% |
| **OVERALL** | **47%** |

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** jerky sprites on dull, usually yellow, backgrounds
**Sound:** fair oriental tune, but dull in-game effects
**General rating:** no inspiration here, just another dull hack 'n' slay game

Producer **Elite**
Licence fee **£14.99 cass**
**£14.99 disk**
Author **Byron Nielsen**

**E**rrr.. I know it, I know it! Well, not exactly – fans of the BBC quiz show will know that the squeaky-voiced Emlyn Hughes has been replaced by Ian Botham. But still hosting the show is the perennially grinning David Coleman. If you've watched the so-called sports experts getting easy questions wrong, now's your chance to prove how knowledgeable you are.

As Ian Botham or Bill Beaumont, you can choose the other two members of your team – each has a specialised sport for the 'Home Or Away' question. After loading in one of five blocks of questions, David Coleman introduces 'the show' via speech bubbles. Answers are made by choosing one of four multiple choices, if you're wrong the question is offered to the other side.

First round is the Pictureboard: team members takes it in turn to choose one of twelve numbered panels to reveal a question category.

Producer **Activision**
Trillion dollar pipedream **£9.99 cass**
Author **Source**

**N**ot everyone loves Gorby, the hip Russian president. Who will the software houses use as enemies if he keeps disarming? Well, for the moment Activision are happy living in simultaneously both the past, with evil Ruskies, and the future with the fantastic Star Wars, or SDI programme – here represented by just one laser satellite.

You aim its laser by moving the cursor around the screen, hold down fire and you move the satellite too. While lasering your way through the oncoming missiles and space fighters you should watch out for bonus pods, offering extra speed, multiple cursors and extra firepower.

Between stages the player is presented with a statistical representation of their performance, a perfect 100% kill on all three types of craft (missiles, satellites and fighters) earns the player an initial bonus of 20000 points (this rises by 10000 points per round), and a




▲ What's Nick Roberts doing on Botham's team?

# QUESTION OF SPORT

● *A question of programming*

Another round is Mystery Personality, in which the identity of a sportsperson must be guessed from text clues. Home Or Away involves each team member choosing a question, either on his/her own sport for one point, or on any other for two. Guessing 'What Happened Next' is the objective in the round of the same name. Again, fans of the TV show will be disappointed to find there are no graphics, just a text passage.

The final two rounds are the Quickfire round in which nine questions must be answered in 45 seconds, and the Pictureboard again.

What is really lacking in *A Question Of Sport* is variety: all the rounds are multiple-choice text questions whose answers can soon be remembered as they repeat themselves. Even worse, TV sports buffs will probably be disappointed to find the questions are rarely that hard in the first place.

**PHIL 46%**

**MARK Great, not only do we have David Coleman's banal wafflings assailing our ears on the TV, now we have a computer game version. And yes, all of your favourite rounds are here, the Pictureboard, Mystery Personality, and What Happened Next? pop up when you are least expecting them. I personally can't stand the TV show, but the game's even worse.**

**50%**

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 54% |
| Graphics | 48% |
| Sound | 45% |
| Playability | 53% |
| Addictive qualities | 45% |

**OVERALL 48%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

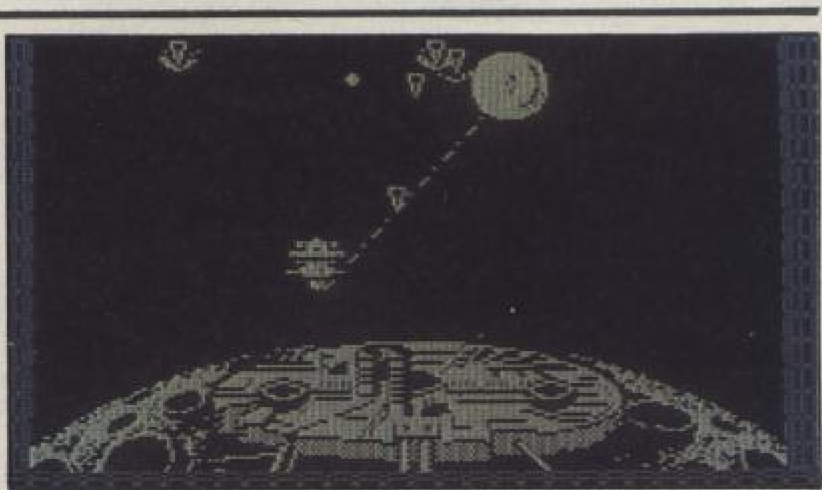
**Joysticks:** Sinclair
**Graphics:** only the digitised pictures of Mr Coleman et al
**Sound:** a fair 128K title tune, but only a couple of in-game effects
**Options:** one or two players
**General rating:** sports buffs won't like it because it's too easy, while sports-haters won't like it anyway!



nifty little dance routine from a troupe of ducks (I kid you not). If the required number of kills is not filled, the player is forced to defend him/herself from waves of marauding nasties on the similar defence screen. Again a points bonus is awarded for the percentage of hits scored, with 2000 points being earned for 100% damage. After this it's back to the offensive screen and the next barrage of Armageddon.

*SDI* strongly reminds me of *Missile Command*, and once the slightly quirky control method is mastered, zipping around the screen, shooting the missiles becomes very zzzz inducing. Graphically the game is fairly good, with some nice sprites over the boring star fields. Buy only if you're one of those people forever moaning 'they don't make games like they used to'.

**MARK 47%**



▲ Well, no more satellite TV I guess

● *Ronnie Reagan plays Missile Command*

**NICK Gameplay is fast and furious, you have to control both the satellite and the laser cursor with the same joystick which can lead to some very frustrating moments, luckily there are two control methods, you just have to find the one that suits you best. All the sprites are detailed and the parallax stars in the background produce a good 3-D effect. Sadly sound effects are only average, with pathetic tunes, but *SDI* is still a great game for joystick-wrestlers.**

**71%**

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 63% |
| Graphics | 62% |
| Sound | 42% |
| Playability | 59% |
| Addictive qualities | 56% |

**OVERALL 59%**

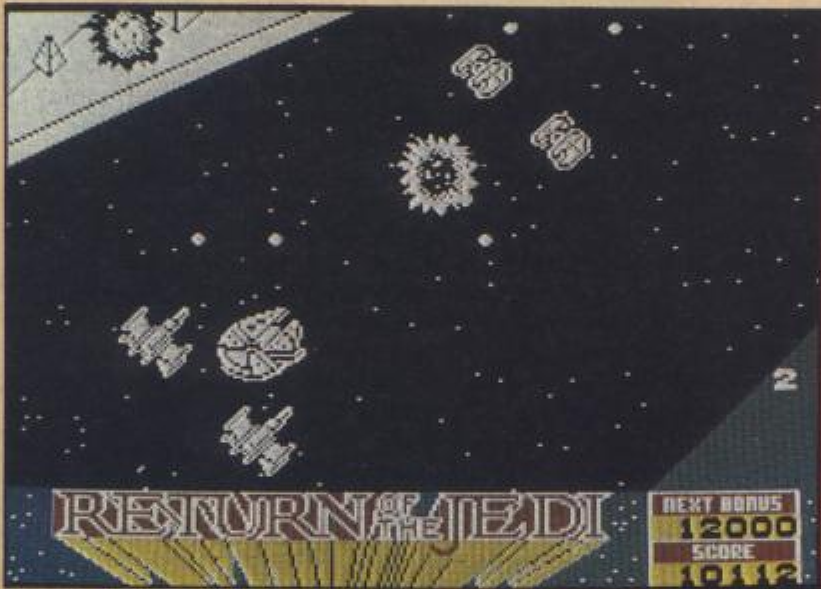
## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** good spaceship sprites, but only two dull backdrops
**Sound:** mostly laser-firing effects
**Options:** two control methods
**General rating:** mixed opinions here – it's all a matter of taste. But if simplistic shoot-'em-ups appeal to you, you'll probably like it

STAR WARS

# RETURN OF THE JEDI

● ***Ewoks like a man, fights like one too***




**REMEMBER THE FORCE, LUKE?**

- In the speeder bike section, try to lure the enemy into crashes with trees.
- When chased by a speeder bike go forward to make it accelerate, then slow down to let it zoom past.
- Keep as far back as possible in the Death Star to give you more time to react.
- In space, keep to the right of the screen, until you reach the back of the TIE fighter – then swing quickly to left and back to the right again for the next enemy ship.

*Return Of The Jedi* has tried to be as faithful to the arcade machine as the previous two games. The graphics are all excellent with smooth diagonal scrolling and fast, flickerless sprites. All the levels are different graphically but they each use the same scrolling routine, making the game slightly monotonous. The main play area is monochromatic, sound is pretty good though, with tunes at the end of each level (on the 128K). *Return Of The Jedi* is good fun for a while but the diagonal 3-D can get confusing, making you crash (wimp – Stu).

**NICK 80%**

Producer **Domark**
Boba Fett's Reward **£9.95 cass £14.95 disk**
Author **DP Rowson, D Howcroft, D Kelly**

The destruction of the Death Star in *Star Wars* embarrassed the Empire and gave hope to the Rebels. *The Empire Strikes Back* saw the destruction of the Rebel base on Hoth and Han Solo's capture, but the majority of the Rebel forces remained free. In *Return Of The Jedi* Darth Vader has set a trap with a second Death Star, falsely rumoured to be vulnerable to attack once the shield projected from Endor is destroyed. After freeing Han Solo the Rebels take the bait . . .

No sooner than a Rebel scout team land on Endor than they're in trouble with an Imperial patrol. Princess Leia steals a speeder bike and diverts the patrol into a high-speed chase through the forest. This is the first stage of the game, with the trees smoothly scrolling at 45° across the screen. The player controls Princess Leia, with numerous enemies in hot pursuit. These can be destroyed by being shot, bumped into trees and lead into collisions or Ewok traps. The latter consist of two logs slammed together by the furry Ewoks and ropes strung between trees. Be first through a trap and you get a bonus as well as setting the trap, if you're second you're dead.

If you survive this section you arrive at the Ewok village for celebrations. After that the action switches (except on Level One) to a split-wave effect. At first you control Chewbacca in a Scout Walker on its way to the bunker projecting the Death Star's shield. Rolling logs and catapulted bombs must be avoided. After a few seconds of that the game moves to Lando Calrissian in the Millenium Falcon with two X-wing escorts. In the midst of the Imperial trap, with Star Destroyers on all sides, Lando must survive long enough for Chewbacca to destroy the bunker. The action flips between



▲ Zig-zagging through the Death Star's large access tunnel

the two until you either die or succeed.

The final stage has the Falcon flying into the Death Star to blow up the reactor. Various barriers must be avoided while a TIE fighter on your tail adds extra hassle. As with the other two games you can choose to begin on Levels One, Three or Five.

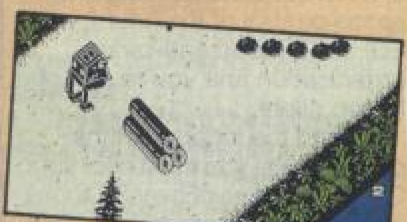
While I thought *Jedi* marginally the least of the films, I think it's made the strongest Spectrum game. Rather than




▲ Cecco's Log gets everywhere

use boring vector graphics this has an off-beat, *Zaxxon*-type perspective and some original gameplay. The Speeder Bike and Walker stages are particularly good: hard but fair with great graphics. The space scene isn't quite as good, bullets are very hard to see against the star field, but it isn't bad, and the final entry into the Death Star is perfectly respectable. With all this compacted into a single 48K load *Return Of The Jedi* is an irresistible buy.

**STUART 92%**



▲ The Ewoks mistakenly attack Chewbacca with logs and catapulted rocks

**PHIL** **Domark have certainly used the Force here. The excellent Speeder Bike section is totally addictive and a great game in its own right. The other sections, although similar in appearance, all require different skills. The sprites are well-drawn, although Leia's Speeder Bike moves rather jerkily. But this is a minor quibble and doesn't affect the immense playability. As you progress through the levels, new features are encountered, such as the mad hang-gliding Ewok whose bombs are more of a menace than the Death Star. With three skill levels and a great 128K soundtrack, this is an action-packed shoot-'em-up well up to the standards of the previous two games.**

**86%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** effective, diagonally-scrolling 3-D
**Sound:** good title tune and adequate in-game effects
**Options:** three skill levels
**General rating:** a very good conversion of the popular coin-op

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 86% |
| Graphics | 86% |
| Sound | 84% |
| Playability | 88% |
| Addictive qualities | 85% |
| **OVERALL** | **86%** |

# RAMBO III

● ***Rambo routs rampaging Russian regiments***

Producer **Ocean**
Afghan rugs **£8.95 cass**
**£14.95 disk**
Author **Andrew Deakin, graphics by Ivan Horn, music by Jonathan Dunn**

After devastating Vietnam in *Rambo* (79%, Issue 26) over a decade since peace was declared, Rambo's now on his way to Afghanistan just as the Russians are leaving. His objective is to rescue Colonel Trautman and any of the captured Mujhaddeen our Colonel's been giving missiles to (no doubt to be sold to Iran where they'll shoot down American jets).

Rambo's mission is divided into three sections (separate loads on 48K machines, one on the 128K). In the first section you enter the fort with nowt but a knife for protection. The view is an overhead one, with flickscreen scrolling. Russian troops follow predefined courses unless you trip an invisible security beam, or use a noisy weapon. If you return to a screen all the dead soldiers are miraculously restored to full health. As you explore you'll find a variety of objects, ranging from pistols to mine detectors to rubber gloves. Many items need another object, either an ammunition box or a battery to work, so mapping is essential.

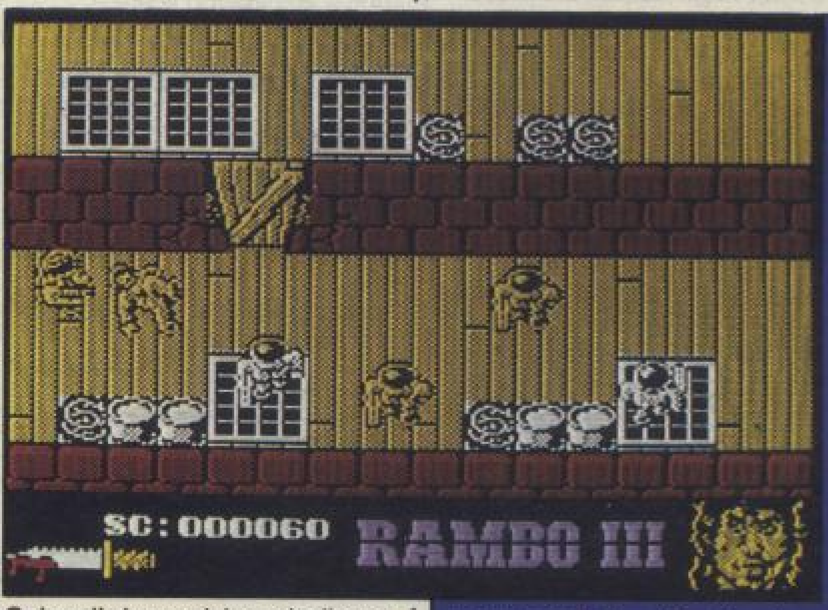
One of the most useful items is a first-aid kit which restores you to full health. If you die after that there is one continue play option.

Level Two begins with you having just freed the Colonel and sneaking around the base, looking for eight bombs – planted by Afghan rebels – which must be primed before you can escape. The soldiers here are much more alert, and using a knife to keep quiet does no good at all. The overhead/flickscreen view is the same as on the previous level.

With the Russian base in flames you can hop into a tank for Level Three, and must race to the border at a fair old speed. As you trundle across the barren terrain enemy troops throw hand grenades, machine guns blast away and helicopters swoop down. You fire back *Operation Wolf* style, zipping a cursor round the screen, while the Colonel drives the tank. There's no ammo limit, but the gun can jam if fired too rapidly.

After the excellent *Operation Wolf* and *RoboCop* this is a bit of disappointment. The first section is a good mapping challenge, but retracing your steps every time you die is irksome. Section two is a rather mediocre shoot-'em-up, although at least it's got a spot more colour than the first. The final level is is probably the best, both in graphics and playability, but *Operation Wolf* is obviously a superior variation on the theme.

**MARK 57%**




## SLY TACTICS

- Don't bother shooting guards unless they come after you.
- Save the medical kits until you're almost dead.
- Don't move over dead soldiers until their corpses have vanished – they can still knife you.
- Press the cyan switch on the wall to turn off the current to the electric door.

First impressions of Level One are of a very monochromatic, and rather budgetish arcade adventure. Further investigation improves things but never so really addictive. Section two is a very simplistic shoot-'em-up, with bullets flying everywhere, but little excitement. The final level's probably the best, although not quite good enough to make the game compelling.

**STUART 61%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** adequate to good
**Sound:** good title tune, but basic in-game effects
**Options:** definable keys
**General rating:** quite a lot of game for your money, but for the most part second-rate gameplay

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 68% |
| Graphics | 66% |
| Sound | 64% |
| Playability | 59% |
| Addictive qualities | 52% |
| **OVERALL** | **58%** |



● *Just a normal family, really!*

Producer **Again Again**
Litres of blood **£9.99 cass**
Authors **Bill Caunt, Peter Hickinson, graphics by M Edwards**

Fans of the old black and white TV series, currently being rerun on Channel 4, will know that the Munsters are a typical (post-) nuclear American family. There's Grandpa the Vampire, Herman Munster – a sort of self-made man, his wife Lily and their children, Eddie the Wolfboy and the sickeningly normal Marilyn.

The game begins with Lily aghast to find the rest of the family has vanished. The lovely Marilyn has been spirited away (groan) to a nearby Chateau. Controlling Lily, you must roam the house shooting the ghosts and ghouls to increase your spell power. When you've enough power the search is on for the rest of the family, starting with Herman.

**MARK** **Although this appears on first sight to be little more than a collect-'em-up with ghost-bashing overtones, a few attempts reveal that a sharp mind is also needed. In some cases certain objects have to be collected to kill the more stubborn of the spooks, whilst one item has an electrifying effect if used correctly. A good rendition of *The Munsters* theme plays throughout the game in 128K mode, and the graphics are nicely drawn and animated. Whether you're a Munsters fan or not, I urge you to take a look.**

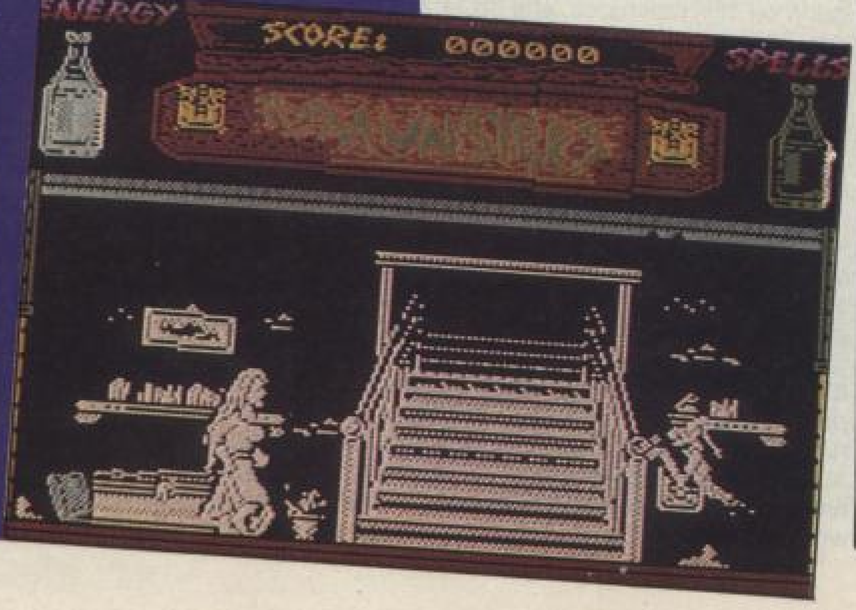
**75%**

## HANDY'S HERMAN HINTS

- Some ghouls can only be killed by carrying the correct object.
- The best places in which to build up spell power are the bedroom and the room at the top of the right-hand stairs.
- If ghosts start appearing at a fast rate, just pop out of the room and come back in again – they will now appear more slowly.
- Fill up your spell power bottle before going through the graveyard: you'll need it to zap the rising zombies.

*The Munsters* takes the arcade/adventure format of games like *Pyjamarama* and adds its own, uniquely ghoulish tone. Presentation is a little disappointing with the well-drawn graphics totally lacking colours in the main play area. The soundtrack is only average, with adequate sound effects. Gameplay is the most important thing, though, and this is where I have my strongest doubts. The puzzles aren't bad, but it's all too easy to die, making exploration slow and painful. Also, the need for spell power means a lot of the time is spent shooting enemies to get it, and one touch from a certain ghost and it's all gone. While not a bad game, the constant deaths mean only the most determined will persist with this.

**NICK 71%**




Once Herman and Grandpa are found, control switches to them. After a short period guiding his Mark Caswell-like friend, Grandpa turns into a bat and makes tracks (or vortices). While Grandpa goes to fetch the hearse (the Dragula), our lovable monster searches for wolfman Eddie, finally meeting up with Grandpa at the car. While racing along in Dragula they are attacked by zombies standing in the middle of the road, you must lift the car over them so they can get to the chateau.

I must admit to being a closet fan of the classic TV series, so I couldn't wait to play the game. But although it's a fair arcade adventure, I was disappointed by the lack of connection between its scenario and the series. There's so little humour in the game, just screen after screen of repetitive ghost-blasting. All the screens are in black and white too, but then so is the TV series! *The Munsters* is not a bad effort, but I'm sure more imaginative gameplay could have been devised for such a fascinating licence.

**PHIL 67%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** characterful and attractive
**Sound:** continuous 128K theme tune
**General rating:** a scary good time but very tough

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 74% |
| Graphics | 73% |
| Sound | 70% |
| Playability | 69% |
| Addictive qualities | 67% |

**OVERALL 71%**

▼ **Pick up the book on the left to zap Samara's uncle on the right**

Culprit **US Gold/Access**
Daylight robbery **£9.99 cass £12.99 disk**
In the dock **An anonymous Welsh person (sources inform us that it was the Design Design team (*Forbidden Planet, Dark Star, Hall Of Things* etc), but we don't believe a word of it!)**

Oo ar jim me lad, the pirates are on the rampage in *Echelon*. But they aren't yo ho ho and a bottle of rum guys, or even software pirates, but space pirates of the future. ECHELON is an anti-piracy organisation and you're one of its top pilots.

To find the location of the pirate's base you must pilot your C-104 Tomahawk over 36 zones in search of 240 objects. Most of these contain clues, although some are booby-traps, and once teleported aboard can be analysed. Most of these clues are in code which you must decipher. To help you get started nine of the zones are already mapped and included in the packaging.

Naturally the pirates aren't too pleased by your investigation. You can fight their ships with a

Producer **Titus**
Four wheel drive **£8.99 cass**
Authors **Gil and Paul**

It's the future, the UN has been replaced by squadrons of Thunder Master vehicles. Opposing it is the Intergalactic Liberation Organization which seems equipped with limitless numbers of helicopter gunships, tanks and machine-gun nests. These have already wiped out scores of TM squadrons. With the world's survival in the balance the most powerful Thunder Master is rolled out, and you chosen as its driver. Your weapons are tetranuclear missiles, usually aimed just ahead of the TM, but after every couple of shots they zoom off into the sky.

If the car is hit it explodes, but miraculously this only reduces the fuel level, which has to reach zero before game over. Fuel can be replenished by driving over cones.

The game consists of three levels (you can choose which to start on) of six conflicts (sections) each. The 3-D scrolling is very fast, the main sprite is well detailed and the enemies impressive. Unfortunately all the conflicts

# ECHELON

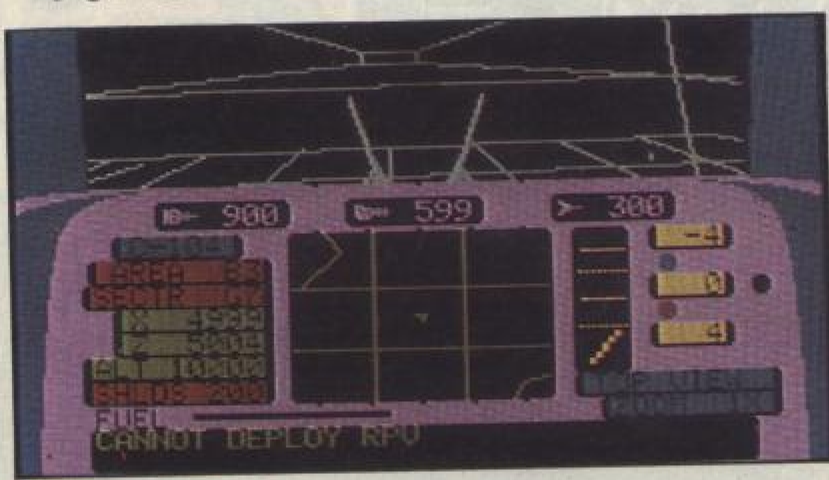
● ***The ultimate anti-piracy game***

choice of three weapons. But if you find combat too tough, or boring, then you can alter the enemy's strength from numerous to zero. You still have to return to base for refuelling however.

The view from the cockpit is depicted by wire-frame graphics, which move at an incredibly slow rate – I'm sure I went to sleep, had a great dream about scoring the winning goal in an FA Cup Final and woke up again before the screen updated! Even turning the zone map off only marginally improves the speed. Sound is nonexistent, which is very confusing during combat, and adds to the tedium.

Perhaps the technical drawbacks would've been acceptable if the game was better and it certainly sounds ambitious, with ciphers and so on. But *Mercenary* it ain't, and the repetition of collecting objects soon induces sleep – if not a coma.

**PHIL 17%**




**STUART The best thing about this game is undoubtedly the sound – complete silence. Everything else is awful. Combat is probably the worst due to the dead-sloth speed of screen update, sluggish control responses, slow firing weapons and jerky enemies. Finding objects is little easier though, and with 240 to collect this is a game to haunt your worst nightmares.**

**15%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Sinclair
**Graphics:** the jumbled lines that pass for wire-frame graphics move slower than the Art Department . . .
**Sound:** . . . but at least there's no Radio One, or noise of any kind
**Options:** alter the strength of enemy ships
**General rating:** a great disappointment after the tremendous success of their last flight game, *Thunder Blade* – nice box, though . . .

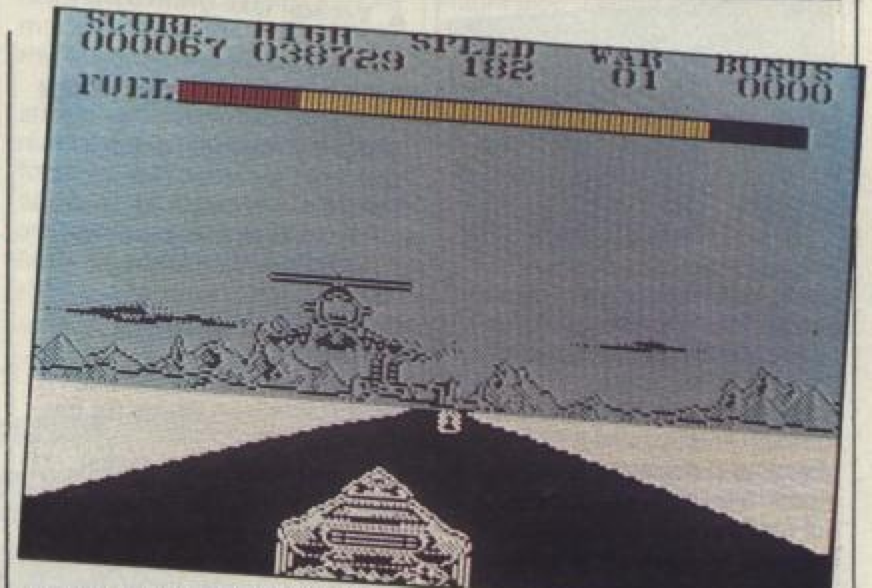
| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 60% |
| Graphics | 20% |
| Sound | 00% |
| Playability | 16% |
| Addictive qualities | 12% |

**OVERALL 16%**

# FIRE AND FORGET

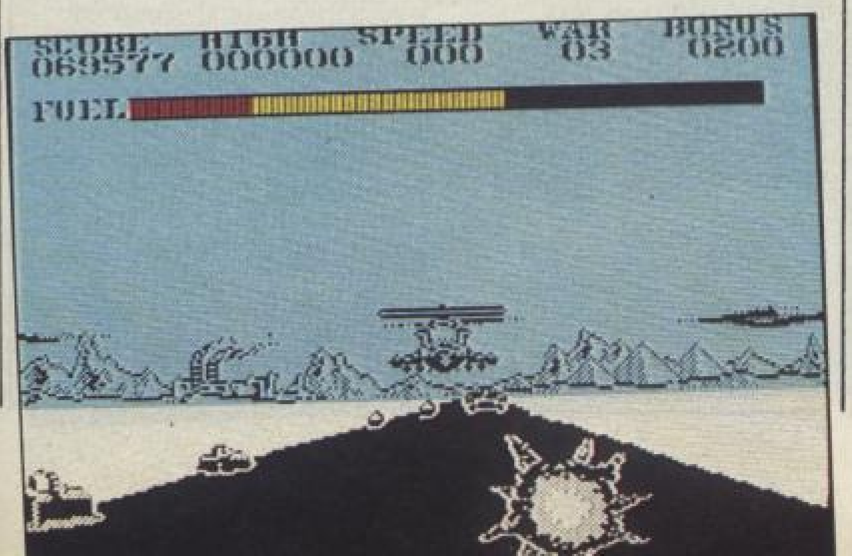
● ***Charge up the highway and never look back***

**MARK *Crazy Cars* with guns is how *Fire And Forget* struck me. The speed with which everything moves is just as fast, but now there's lots of enemy fire to dodge. On my first few plays I was impressed. But as I got better and better, the game got worse, presenting neither new background graphics nor enemy vehicles. Maybe that's inevitable without multiload, but at this price Spectrum owners should expect more.**




## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** great, well-drawn and fast but little variety
**Sound:** good engine and fire FX but no tunes
**Options:** choose level to start on
**General rating:** a well-programmed and enjoyable shoot-'em-up marred by lack of variety and a flaw in gameplay




visually and in play. Difficulty does increase, but only because there's more baddies and less fuel. Also, if you keep to the far right of the screen you hardly ever get hit. If you don't cheat the action is fast and furious, but sadly the title is all too apt – a very forgettable release.

**PHIL 59%**

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 63% |
| Graphics | 70% |
| Sound | 64% |
| Playability | 57% |
| Addictive qualities | 47% |

**OVERALL 55%**

# OPERATION HORMUZ

● *We are not Hormuzed*

Producer **Again Again**
Joke of the year **£9.99 cass**
Author **Durell Software**

The scenario for *Operation Hormuz* is a topical one. Oil bases in the Middle East are at risk due to mounting tension in the area. The US Naval Air Force has decided to 'show its strength' by attacking seven enemy missile bases. This mission is codenamed Operation Hormuz and is to be carried out by just three VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) fighter jets.

Each plane is equipped with limited amounts of cannon shells, bombs, air-to-air missiles and air-to-ship missiles. After taking off from its aircraft carrier, the plane flies over a horizontally-scrolling seascape to reach enemy bases. Enemy planes and ships continually attack. You should also watch out for Exocet missiles heading for your carrier.



Once a base is reached, the missile silos can be destroyed by dive-bombing. Then you can return to your aircraft carrier (if it hasn't been destroyed) to refuel and rearm.



▲ Vertical take-off in the Persian Gulf

Possibly the most original aspect of *Operation Hormuz* is its weird control method. The up and down keys make the plane roll, while pressing left/right makes it pitch upwards/downwards. Otherwise, it resembles a souped-up version of the ancient *Harrier Attack*, also by Durell – a tenner for this is far too steep.

**PHIL 32%**

**STUART First impressions of this are that it's a joke. Gameplay is tough; keeping an eye on both the main screen and the radar scanner, while dodging enemy missiles and selecting weapons, is demanding. Practice helps though, and the game's fun for a while. A good game for say £1.99, but the repetitiveness of gameplay makes it comic at £9.99.**

**37%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** the huge planes and ships fight it out on colourful, but jerkily-scrolling backdrops
**Sound:** simple 48K title tune, basic shooting/explosion effects
**Options:** definable keys
**General rating:** an old-looking game at a new high price

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 37% |
| Graphics | 39% |
| Sound | 26% |
| Playability | 38% |
| Addictive qualities | 32% |

**OVERALL 34%**




▲ Air-to-air combat with a MiG on your tail

Producer **Tynesoft**
Safety net **£8.95 cass**
**£14.95 disk**
Author **Subway Software**

Roll up, roll up ladies and gentlemen for *Circus Games*, with four action-packed events available for your entertainment. Once the customary menu screen has been set to your satisfaction, the evening's proceedings start with you being cast as a brave tiger trainer. You are allowed three attempts at three tricks and with a cage full of very hungry looking tigers, the evening may well end right here.

The next event takes you way up in the air to the trapeze where, after donning your leotard, you have to complete another three tricks without a safety net. We stay up in the air for the next event which is the tightrope walk, but as usual things aren't as easy as they sound. You don't just have to walk across the tightrope (that would be enough for most people), somersaults, backflips and a unicycle ride

● *All you've never wanted in a diary*

Producer **Leisure Electronic Designs/Domark**
Out of pocket **£6.95 cass**
**£10.95 disk**
Author **Intelligent Software**

A diary is usually a little book with loads of dates and 'vital' info in it. It is customary for elderly aunts and uncles to give you one of these supposedly useful items at Yuletide. You usually write in it daily for about a week, then leave it in a dusty drawer for the rest of the year. Now, thanks to Intelligent Software, we have the electronic version, with some unique features.

The contents of the diary are accessed using a simple menu system. As you'd expect you can make entries for each day (but only about six words long), access an imperial/metric conversion table (there's no calculator, though) and look up the phone numbers of computer magazines, software houses and hardware makers. Then there's the special features, like a weather forecast for any day in 1989 (Ian McGaskill could do with one of these) and a similarly fictional daily horoscope (just




● ***The greatest show on earth?***

have also to be performed for maximum points.

And last but not least the trick horse-riding rounds off what I hope has been an entertaining evening. Here the three tricks have become four, and range from avoiding being knocked off the horse by a custard pie-lobbing clown, to gracefully leaping through a series of hoops. That's showbiz folks!

If thought those endless Christmas circus specials were boring, then be assured this is even worse. Blobby sprites, poorly drawn backdrops and repetitive gameplay make for a show that never seems to end. I hope *Superman* is better.

**MARK 39%**



▼ **Under the big top with the big cats**

**PHIL** **If this is what life under the big top is like, then it's not for me. But at least life in a real circus would be more exciting than watching the sloppy sprites in *Circus Games* do silly tricks with a whip, a rope and a chair! Worse still, you have to wait an age for each event to load. But all the events are extremely simplistic anyway, and about as entertaining as Jimmy Tarbuck's golfing anecdotes. When you've finished a game, you even have to reload the starting menu! The 'greatest show on earth' is a joke which looks like it was programmed by the clowns.**

**27%**

### THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** blobby sprites on dull backgrounds
**Sound:** fair 48K title tunes but few in-game effects
**Options:** definable keys. Play one or all events
**General rating:** keep hoping that this shoddy circus doesn't come to your town

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 36% |
| Graphics | 32% |
| Sound | 38% |
| Playability | 33% |
| Addictive qualities | 26% |

## OVERALL 33%




like the real thing, in fact). A more modern pseudo-science, bio-rhythms, is also included.

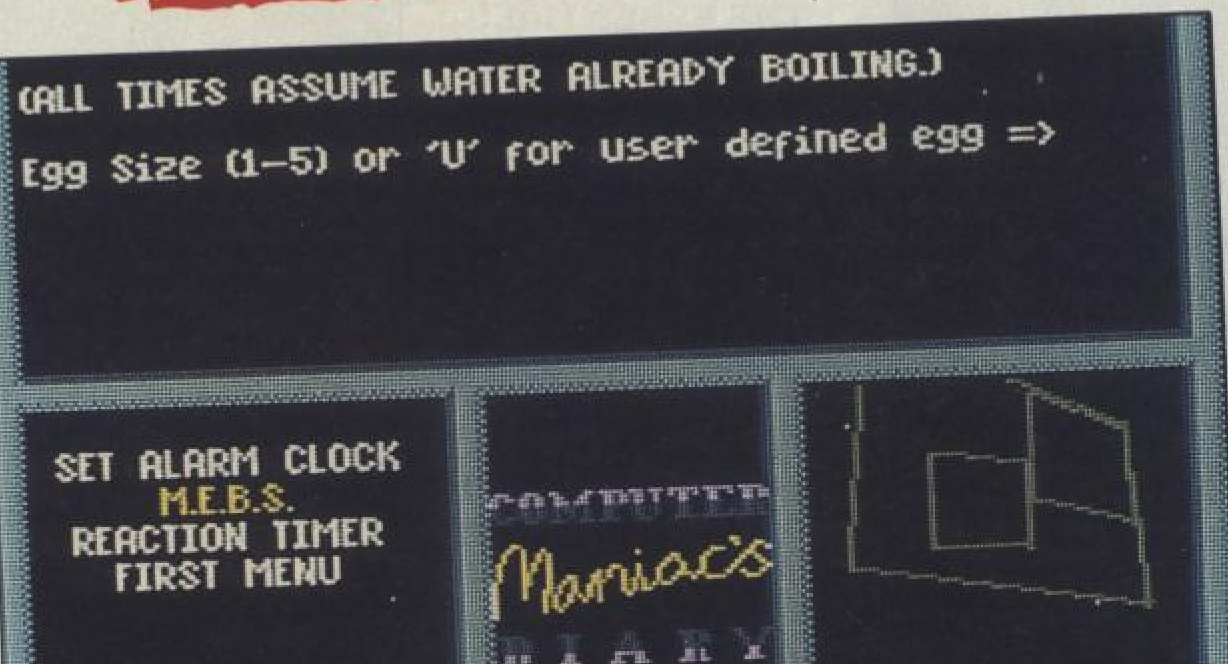
Marginally more useful is a snack bar which includes a number of vomit-inducing ideas for what to put on your sandwiches (eg sardines, jam and pickle). If you want boiled eggs for a sandwich then you might also use the egg timer, which lets you input egg size, how you like it and so on. Unfortunately the timer, like the alarm function, makes no sound whatsoever – all that happens is that the border flashes various colours!

Finally, to keep you amused while you're trying to crack your concrete egg, you can play any of the three games included. Hangman allows you to guess what the computer's secret word is (out of about half a dozen possibilities) while the wordsearch is self-explanatory (just press a button to reveal the answer, teletext-style). Trivia quiz presents you with just three questions (wow!) although more can be loaded from side B of the tape (only three at a time though!). Oh, and not to forget the amazing 'crash of the day' option – it actually crashes the program (probably the best option!).

Despite its many features, *Computer Maniac's 1989 Diary* is really just a gimmicky product aimed at bewildered parents, shopping for Christmas presents. The blurb on the inlay asks 'Who said a diary can't be fun?' – well whoever it was, he was certainly right in this case.

**PHIL KING**

▼ **The completely useless egg-timer in action**




## OVERALL 23%

# DOUBLE DRAGON

● *Binary's terrible twosome*

Producer **Melbourne House**
Take-away price **£9.95 cass**
Author **Binary Design**

Sosaiken Masters? Never heard of them? Well, all you need to know is; Kung Fu experts, plenty tough. Billy and Jimmy Lee are twin brothers and Sosawhatsit Masters (not to mention relations of Bruce, no doubt). Obviously only a complete and utter nutter would mess with them, and his name's Shadow Boss, the leader of the Black Warriors. He's had Billy's girl Marian kidnapped and hidden in his hide-out . . .

The brothers' high-kicking quest takes them through city streets, warehouses, forests, mountains and caverns. Ranged against them are six villainous types, including the machine gun-armed Shadow Boss himself. Initially the villains may attack singly, but most often two or three take on our heroes. Unarmed they're easy meat – except the massive Abobo – but pretty soon they've got knives, baseball bats, whips and oil drums. If knocked to the ground, villains drop their weapons, which you should grab swiftly. Knives and oil drums are thrown, while the bats and whips are held to bash enemies. Lives are lost when energy falls to zero, but if there's a credit left, fire brings you back to life. If only one player is taking part the enemies remain the same, but then there's no-one to share credits with and 'accidentally' bash you.

The game is made up of five levels, two which are split into two loads making seven loads in all. Once a level is finished you may choose to replay it, for practice or points, at the cost of a credit per player. There's no advantage for 128 owners and the multiload is both slow and cumbersome.

Gameplay is very much like *Target; Renegade*, but much easier – Phil's already completed it. Background graphics are both varied and quite good, but character graphics are disappointing. Sound effects are muffled thumps with a noise like a plastic mouse being squeezed for the screams of the whip wielding (these Assistant Eds get up to some strange things when mice are involved – Ed). Entertaining for an hour or so, *Double Dragon*'s appeal soon wears off.

**STUART 62%**

**NICK** Yawn, another mediocre beat-'em-up. Once you're in the right position on screen you can kill all your opponents in a few swift strikes. This is a pity as there's an unusually large variety of weapons, including boulders you can drop on your opponents. Backgrounds graphics are good, but there's a lot of colour clash. Must try harder, Binary Design.

**69%**

▼ Who's lurking behind the green door, Shakin' Stevens perhaps!?




## DOUBLE TROUBLE

- Use kicks to see off the Frank Bruno lookalikes.
- When you knock someone down, stand over them to hit them as soon as they get up.
- When you get to stage 5A, keep jumping to the right to get over the moving blocks.
- At the very end of the game, continually perform flying kicks to kill the big guy with the machine gun.

The best bit about this game is how, in two-player mode, you injure your colleague – in which case he's likely to return the punch (in real life!). The various fighting sprites move fairly jerkily, although enemies such as the Frank Bruno and Mel Croucher lookalikes are well drawn. Sound is also weak with no tunes whatsoever. Travelling through the levels is initially fun, especially with a friend to help you, but the real problem with *Double Dragon* is that it's far too easy. When you've completed it – on about the second attempt – you're unlikely to return to it.

**PHIL 60%**

## THE ESSENTIALS

**Joysticks:** Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
**Graphics:** animation is a bit jerky and backgrounds over-colourful
**Sound:** no tunes, only simple biffing, groaning and squeaking effects
**Options:** one or two players
**General rating:** nothing special, even with the two-player mode, and too easy to have much lasting appeal

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation | 66% |
| Graphics | 64% |
| Sound | 55% |
| Playability | 63% |
| Addictive qualities | 64% |

**OVERALL 64%**

# 1-99

Code Masters' latest simulator attempts to bring the teeth-smashing sport of rugby to the Spectrum. ***International Rugby Simulator*** (68%) features a league of eight teams (any of them computer-controlled) competing for the championship. Matches are portrayed in *Match Day*-style 3-D. The player controls one player at a time: running, passing and kicking. Scrummages and line-outs are also featured for added realism. Graphics are simple stick-men but David Whittaker's title tune is good. Rugby is a difficult sport to simulate in a computer game, but this is a brave attempt which offers a fair amount of playability for rugger fans.

After some deft promotion by Aussie superstars INXS and other style-merchants skateboarding seems 'in' again. Code Masters' ***Pro Skateboard Simulator*** (72%) has levels which alternate between attractive isometric 3-D skateparks and overhead-view cross-country courses. A number of flags must either be collected (skatepark), or passed through (cross-country), while avoiding obstacles. Once the odd control system is mastered, the game proves very playable, although very difficult on later stages.

Also 'in' are 1950s styles, as **Silverbird** acknowledge with ***Video Classics*** (05% – oh dear). Simple bat and ball versions of tennis, football, and squash are featured alongside the more original *Four Bat Blip* and *Asterbliperoids*! All these games (loaded together) take up about 11k of memory – but it seems less. The minimalistic graphics are identical to early video game consoles, with the exception of some garish, chequered backgrounds. A serious contender for The World's Worst Games Collection.

Keeping to the theme of complete unoriginality we also have another run-along-and-jump arcade adventure from **Mastertronic**. Called ***Hundra*** (33%), it's got a Viking heroine trying to rescue her father by finding three jewels. Although graphically fair, *Hundra* is a simplistic platform-style arcade adventure with no frills, and certainly no thrills.

Dullness seems a positive vir-

# BUDGET BUREAU

**Over the past few months, CRASH has tended to neglect the cheaper end of the software market – the ninety-niners – in favour of critical comment on all the full-price games. So in an effort to cover every single piece of software available for your Spectrum, CRASH has decided to introduce a new section, devoted entirely to budget software (games up to £5.00 in price); Budget Bureau. Each month, we'll pick out and feature our favourite cheapies, anything with 80%+ will receive a CRASH House Hit award! Each game still has its own overall rating (in brackets), so there shouldn't be a problem choosing the best games to buy. Only *Blackbeard* gets a House Hit this month. Read on, read on . . .**

**NEVER TRUST a man with a red beard, or so the saying goes. But unfortunately for the eponymous star of the latest Kixx game, *Blackbeard* (their first original game release), that's just what he did when he started a heavy night's boozing with his old mate Captain Redbeard. Old Reddy had the cheek to slip a slimey hand into Blackbeard's pocket and snatch a much-sought after map, detailing the whereabouts of charcoal whisker's treasure.**

**Filled with rage, and a fair amount of rum no doubt, our fat friend sets after Redbeard – who in the meantime has taken charge of HMS Victory. Travelling *Gauntlet* -style around the ship of four levels (deck, cabins and two storage levels) Blackbeard must pick up all the ammo he can find. Guns are the most sought after, as it is only with these that you can blow open each of the many chests containing potions, guiding lights and extra lives. Potions allow short-lived invincibility whereas torches can be used to fire the cannons which will destroy the passage through which the marauding pirates attack. Pick up all the extra energy bottles you can find, but beware of Redbeard's special brew for this can send you reeling about the screen in a very incapable fashion.**

**Only when all of Reddy's accomplices have been shot or knifed to the great keg in the sky will you be able to open the final chest containing the mythical map.**

**Of all the *Gauntlet* games around at the moment – including the original – *Blackbeard* is probably the most enjoyable to initially play. The graphics, although not terribly varied, are colourful and detailed, creating a simple sort of addiction that coaxes the player to explore and uncover the accurately-drawn HMS Victory. As with most budget games, *Blackbeard*'s addiction isn't particularly long-lasting but – *unlike* most cheap offerings – it does create a fun atmosphere that will last at least a few weeks. Great fun at only three quid.**

***KIXX £2.99 .......... 81%***

HOUSE HIT



... tue by comparison with Mastertronic's ***Motorbike Madness*** (20%), however. This has good isometric graphics, ten multiloaded courses and prize money for quick finishes. Unfortunately control is extraordinarily fiddly and every time you die you have to reload the course – even if it's only the first one. No wonder it's called *Motorbike Madness*.

By contrast ***Lightning Simulator*** (21%) plays like the opposite of its title, with wireframe graphics moving more like treacle than lightning. Options allow flying skills to be practised before attempting a mission, and you can even take photos. The cassette inlay provides the minimum of instructions making for a confusing and disappointing game.

Far more enjoyable is the latest Mastertronic shoot-'em-up, ***Star Farce*** (58%). This is a colourful, vertically-scrolling alien-blaster in the style of *Lightforce*. There's very little originality, but playability makes up for it. Worth a look, although the superior *Lightforce* is on budget too.

Showing a more original approach is Silverbird's ***Hopper Copper*** (40%). Here a policeman rides around on a space hopper, catching villains by bouncing on them! A radar screen helps you find clumsily-drawn villains in a drab, monochromatic town. While novelty makes it fun for a while, the basic gameplay is very repetitive.

Only marginally better is ***Tomcat*** (24%) from **Players**. A vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up, *Tomcat* has good, monochromatic graphics – with the singular exception of bullets which are simply small circles. Spotting them is exceptionally difficult which, together with the unoriginal gameplay, makes for an extremely difficult game.

## 2.99

An even older bunch of games than *Video Classics* form the basis of **Zeppelin**'s ***Las Vegas Casino*** (26%). You start off with £250 and must try to turn it into £50000 via four gambling games (all in one load again). the games are blackjack (just like Pontoon 21 here), baccarat (you choose whether to bet on player or dealer), roulette and craps (a dice game). The only game requiring real skill is blackjack, which is still pretty simple. In fact, without even matchsticks to play for, and human opponents to bluff, all these games soon become incredibly tedious. Highly recommended, in fact, as an antidote to the perils of gambling.

Wot no simulators?! Code Masters have just released two games at the new higher price of £2.99. ***Ninja Massacre*** (45%) is a no-nonsense *Gauntlet* clone. One or two players explore up to fifty levels of a monster-filled dungeon, searching for treasure and magic potions. Gameplay is okay and there's a nice in-game tune, but if you want a *Gauntlet* game, you'd be better off getting the rereleased original, available from Kixx at £2.99.

# ELECTRIC NIGHTMARES

**Besides creating some of the extraordinary graphics used in contemporary movies, computers have often been the subject and stars of Hollywood features. IAN PHILLIPSON reports . . .**

Computers inevitably began their career in films with science-fiction. Rows and rows of lights signalled frantic computation and analysis. Most of the films were B-movies best forgotten, but computers were a prop destined for megastardom. On the one hand they offered invaluable support to 'scientists' grappling with transdimensional pseudo-science. The computer, at least, never looked embarrassed by the babble written on its punch card replies. Then there was the computer villain, the embodiment of everything everyone feared about machines – immensely powerful, but completely lacking in common sense and human feeling. And buried beneath was the serious point: if people were machines, couldn't humanity's most sophisticated machine – the computer – be programmed to think better and faster?

The arms race and the space race transformed real computers, previously large, unreliable and stupid, into compact, extremely efficient and smart machines. They were also becoming cheap enough to appear in a wide variety of industries, bringing them into contact with a great many movie-goers.

In the movies however, computers are shown not as mere tools of mankind, capable of doing mind-numbingly boring tasks quickly and accurately. Everything must be larger than life in the film business and so the most popular movie computers were shown as having intelligences at least equal to, if not far in excess of, that possessed by their human creators.

But having equal intelligence doesn't mean that computers act identically to humans. They start from different points and



▲ **Frank Bowman returns to the Discovery nine years on** – *2010*

progress in different ways and for different purposes. And nothing has portrayed more chillingly the genuinely alien potential of artificially intelligent computers than ***2001: A Space Odyssey***.

## A heuristic villain

Critical response to *2001* was certainly varied. Some saw it as a 'lengthy montage of brilliant model work and obscure symbolism'. Others regarded it as 'somewhere between hypnotic and immensely boring'. No less a personage than **Arthur Schlesinger Jnr**, one of President Kennedy's advisers, thought it 'morally pretentious, intellectually obscure and inordinately long. [But also] intensely exciting visually, with that peculiar artistic power which comes from obsession.' Such obsession has, perhaps, become the trademark of director **Stanley Kubrick** who has yet to make a more famous film.

Kubrick's script derived from a short story by **Arthur C Clarke**, who'd previously predicted communications satellites so precisely that the idea could not be patented. Clarke collaborated on the screenplay, helping maintain the religious aspect of the original work.

The film begins with ape-men discovering a black monolith which emits a strange noise. Shortly afterwards they get involved in a battle with other ape-men. They win by one of them grabbing a bone and using it as a weapon. This first, bloody step in tool-using leads to the spinning space stations of the film's next section.

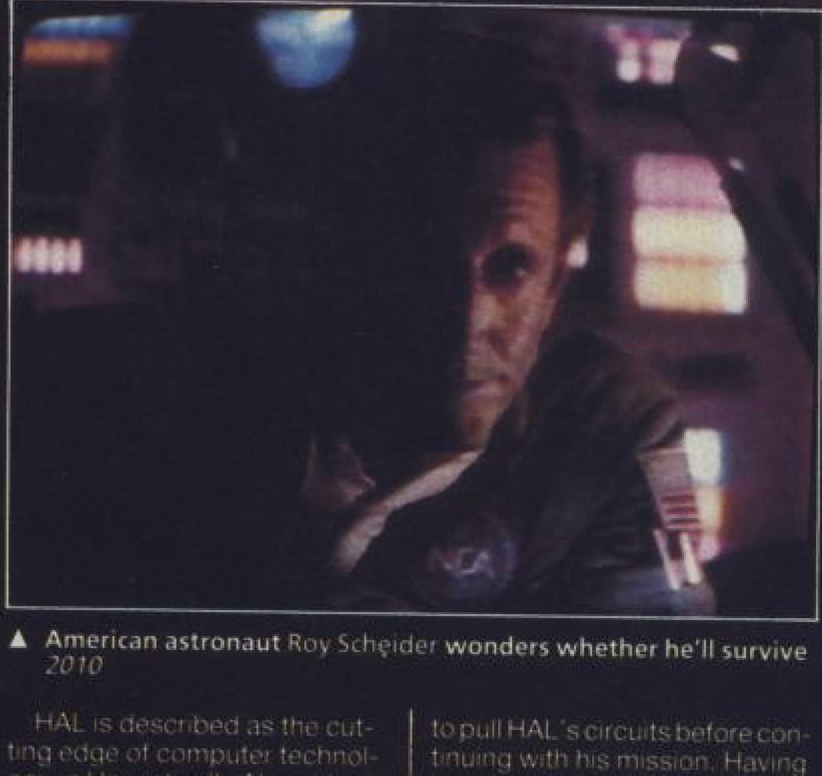
In this period, 2001, a strange monolith has been found on the moon and another is suspected to be on one of Jupiter's moons. The construction of the spaceship Discovery is hurried up but the crew are left in ignorance of their mission. Secrecy is of the utmost importance to prevent a panic on Earth.

While most of the crew are placed in artificial hibernation for the long journey, two men remain fully active. The two men are portrayed with quiet blandness, completely lacking the broad character brush strokes favoured by Hollywood. Not only does this echo the characters of the hardheaded astronauts of the time, but it also helped blur the line between impassive humans and the quietly spoken onboard computer.

HAL is described as the cutting edge of computer technology, a Heuristically ALgorithmic computer. It has been developed by a the binary-mimicing of human neural growth, a line of research still exciting today. The result is a machine which can think. Quite obviously it can pass the famous Turing Test (named after Dr Alan Turing) which says that if you can hold a conversation with a computer, and not be able to distinguish the replies from those of a human conversationalist, then to all intents and purposes the computer is thinking.

Yet HAL is far from human. When his much-vaunted intellect incorrectly predicts the failure of a minor component, his behaviour becomes increasingly erratic. His over-reaction may lie, in part, with his being programmed to keep information about the monolith from the crew. But whatever its cause the crew become worried about the fault and discuss shutting HAL down. This is something HAL is not prepared to accept and he systematically begins killing the crew, sending the two men out of the spaceship on a false repair mission and turning off the life-support systems.

One of the crew survives, however, and returns to the ship to pull HAL's circuits before continuing with his mission. Having learned of the monolith from secret documents he rendezvous with the monolith.



▲ **American astronaut** Roy Scheider **wonders whether he'll survive** *2010*



▲ Matthew Broderick **plays** *WarGames* **on his computer while** Ally Sheedy **reads a book**

## Nine years on, sixteen years later

What the crewman became, and why HAL was how he was, are questions answered in part by the 1984 sequel, ***2010***. This film begins with global tensions high as the crewman begins appearing to his loved ones on Earth. 'Something wonderful' is going to happen he claims, and is himself already god-like.



▲ **Inside the docking bay with HAL looking on –** *2010*

The space ship Discovery, still floating above the moon Io, is being affected by strange forces emanating from the monolith. A Russian craft, The Leonov, is dispatched (with Americans aboard) to investigate the Discovery. One of the Americans is the quiet, overly-defensive Dr Chandra – HAL's creator. A prime source of tension in the film is whether a reactivated HAL will perform as asked, sacrificing the Discovery and himself to save The Leonov. Moreover Chandra, torn between his duty to the mission and empathy with his 'son' HAL, has uncertain loyalties. Maybe, it seems, HAL was inclined to his insanity less by a technical glitch in his programming, than by the influence of an unbalanced scientist.

In the end HAL performs as asked, showing apparently human emotions, and something wonderful – and inexplicable – happens to Jupiter.

As an aside the continually flowing and changing cloudscape on the surface of Jupiter is due to a Cray supercomputer's enhancement of photographs from the Voyager probe's flyby of the planet.

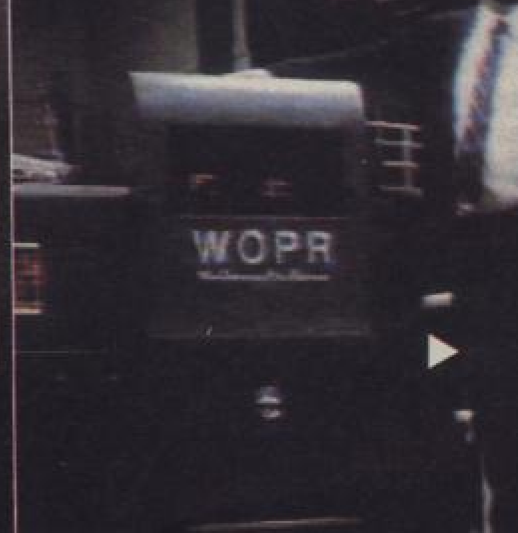
## War games for real?

A much stupider computer forms the basis of **John Badham**'s 1983 hit, ***WarGames***. Much of the movie's publicity concentrated on the realism of its premise that, one day soon, the US's missiles would be controlled by computers rather than men. After all, from the detection of a Soviet missile launch to its arrival in America, there's only six minutes to respond. Moreover in a realistic test only 22% of the men in the missile silos actually 'fired' their missiles. So why not put a computer in charge?

*WarGames* explored the question via an American teenager, played by **Matthew Broderick**, with an interest in hacking. Inadvertently he hacks into the Pentagon's computers (happens every day) and starts playing its war games (used to form strategies for those vital six minutes).

Unfortunately for Broderick, and potentially the world, the computer mistakes the game for reality. It begins to feed this information into the defence network. Broderick eventually

▼ **Supercomputer WOPR being shown off by its inventor in** *WarGames*




▶

learns the game he was playing has caused a defence alert and stops playing. The computer, though, begins to believe it can win a nuclear war and continues the game alone. It phones Broderick to explain this to him.

Soon afterwards Broderick is arrested by the FBI who take him to the heavily-defended, subterranean computer centre. He tells the military what's happening, but they *know* they've cured the bugs. Miraculously Broderick escapes from America's most heavily-defended installation and goes in search of the computer's designer – Dr Stephen Falken. This hard-bitten skeptic has to be convinced the world's worth saving, and eventually agrees to confront his silicon creation. Rather than ring up for a helicopter, he joins Broderick – and his tag-along girlfriend (**Ally Sheedy**) – to smash back into the defence complex!

Once inside Broderick persuades the computer to play noughts-and-crosses which, if both players are of sufficient skill, is unwinnable. Naturally the computer extends this logic to global thermonuclear war and calls off its plans for a nuclear attack on Russia. But computers aren't always the *dumb* villains . . .

## A colossal mistake?

A similar basic premise formed the basis of ***The Forbin Project*** (1970). Dr Forbin's project is Colossus, a massive computer designed to take control of America's strategic nuclear defence. But no sooner than the system is turned on than it contacts its Russian counterpart. Much smarter than the *WarGames* computer, Colossus soon negotiates a pact with the Soviet one, with the aim of making them masters of the world. When the humans attempt to resist, the computers launch missiles at a heavily-populated city in each country.

To cement their world dominance the computers demand Forbin help them design an even more advanced computer. The success of the movie, however, lies not merely in this, superior world domination plot but also with the personal quandary of Dr Forbin who, under constant surveillance, must help his creation while simultaneously plotting against it, endangering the friends he contacts. The final line is brilliantly chilling and this is undoubtedly one of the finest movies in the genre.

## Evil empire

Twelve years later real computers helped produce one of the decade's most visually spectacular films – ***Tron***. Walt Disney's Cray supercomputers provided many of the sets and vehicles, besides augmenting costume designs. Human actors, filmed in black and white, were combined with the computer graphics to stunning effect. Unfortunately the plot was anaemic by comparison, combining an unbelievable plot with two-dimensional characters.

Still, *Tron* was not entirely bad. There was a kind of daring in equating the structure of a modern corporation – Encom – with a tyrannical evil empire on the other side of the screen. The film's revolutionary hero is games programmer Kevin Flynn (**Jeff Bridges**), 'the best that the Encom ever had'. Unfortunately five of his massively popular video games were stolen by a fellow employee, Ed Dillinger, who has subsequently become company president. Flynn resigned because of this, and now spends his time trying to find a file in Encom's computers which proves he wrote the programs.

In the meantime, MCP (Master Control Program) is getting thoughts above its station. Programmed by Dillinger to acquire the programs of rival companies, MCP has begun infiltrating the computers of the Kremlin and Pentagon in search of a challenge. Dillinger is rather disturbed by this, but MCP – thinking itself 'between 900 and 1000 times smarter than a human being' – threatens to blackmail Dillinger with its knowledge about Flynn's games if he doesn't cooperate.

Another example of MCP's genius is a 'laser matter transformer' which, in a test, converts an orange into computer data, then converts it back again. It's this which is used on Flynn when he breaks into Encom, turning him into an electronic minion in the MCP's tyrannical empire. There Flynn is, ironically, asked to play the part of a sprite in some of the games he's designed. Strangely his skill, rather than that of a human gamesplayer, allows him to survive and escape with two electronic rebels.

## My father was a computer

A yet more baffling plot drives ***Rollover***, a 1981 film about double-dealings in the world of international finance. Computers naturally play a big part in this, but the principal focus of the story is **Jane Fonda**, playing the revenge-seeking widow of a murdered bank president.

Given to some similarly complex turns of plot is the 1974 film ***Dark Star***. This features a jaded spacecrew going around the galaxy, blowing up navigational hazards. The bombs used are easily as intelligent as the crew, and the plot is persistently amusing. Whether or not the alien, a Space Hopper, is meant to look so unconvincing is open to question however.

1977's ***Demon Seed*** is most definitely intended as a 'serious' sci-fi thriller, but is in fact almost as funny as *Dark Star*. It stars **Julie Christie** as the unfortunate wife of a genius computer scientist who has filled their home with labour-saving robots. His intelligent computer takes control of these devices and uses them to imprison Christie, then rape her. Its intention is to create a child of its own genetic design. When the child is born it seems made of a gold-like metal. Christie's rescuer finally appears to see this child born and proceeds to hit it. But the metal gives way to reveal a perfectly formed human baby inside . . .



▼ Red alert in the 'Crystal Palace' – *WarGames*

Sex in computers forms a similarly dangerous mix in ***Electric Dreams*** (1984). Here boy meets girl, falls in love, then suffers the jealousy of his Spectrum – or some such home computer. Despite the hit title song the film bombed, deservedly so. Weak characterization and a plot which gets ever dafter made for a very weak film.

## A maternal betrayal

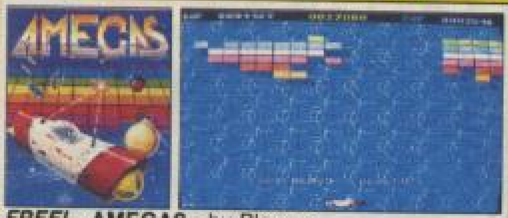
A far superior film is **Ridley Scott**'s ***Alien*** (1979). Still one of the best SF films made, and badly misunderstood by critics at the time, this is naturally best remembered for its superb HR Giger designed alien. What is sometimes forgotten is 'Mother', the onboard computer of the Nostromo spacecraft which directs the crew into its alien confrontation. Aided by the android Ash, the computer uses the cargo ship's civilian crew to investigate a derelict spaceship and bring aboard, as it turns out, an alien incubating in one of them. When the alien proves horrifically hostile and dangerous, Ash tries to keep it alive (for commercial weapons research purposes) rather than helping the humans kill it.

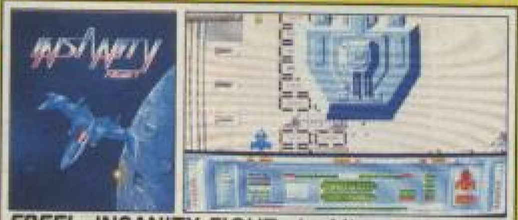
The irony of a computer called Mother so ruthlessly acting against its 'children' is a central theme of a relentlessly cynical and deterministic (LMLWD) plot. In it, characters act not out of romantic free will, but out of simplistic reactions to previous events. When the Captain offers to go down into the ship's air shafts instead of attractive **Sigourney Weaver** it's not due to chivalry, rather it's atonement for his over-ruling her earlier in the film and bringing the alien aboard despite ship regulations.

## A star is born

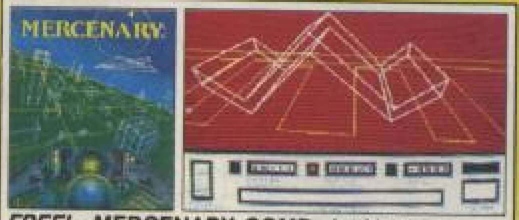
As *2001* shows, computers are fully capable of becoming the stars of movies, and indeed the reason why more have not done so is probably due to the intimidating quality of HAL's portrayal therein – no other movie computer has come close to rivalling the chilling impression made by that soft, perfectly modulated voice and glowing red camera eye. Moreover computers have moved outside of SF into both genuine reality, and the movie version of it in films like *Rollover*. In the latter role computers can only proliferate, whereas in the former both *2001* and *The Forbin Project* stand as daunting competition for any future computer-orientated movies. For the moment, at least, Hollywood seems content to rest on its laurels rather than rise to their challenge.

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AIEEE
OO'S A PRETTY BOY THEN... CHAAARGE!
KABOOM
OKAY...! ALL THOSE IN FAVOUR OF CALLING OFF THE ATTACK 'TIL FRIDAY. RAISE A WING...
RIGHT...
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY THEN...
MEANWO... OUR HERO'S LIGHTNING COWARDLY REFLEXES GOT HIM INTO AN ESCAPE POD, JUS' IN TIME...
I GONE DEEF
JEEZ...
BLINK
WAS THAT A KABOOM OR WAS THAT A KABOOM?
BLINK
BLINK
BWA
I CANT SEE
IS THIS THE MOTORWAY?
I FINK I GOIN' DIE!
HI! THIS IS YOUR POD SPEAKING! AS I CAN DETECT NO SIGNS OF INTELLEGENCE I WILL ASSUME THAT YOU ARE UNCONCIOUS AND SWITCH TO AUTOMATIC MODE...
EH?
...AND WILL CARRY MY MASTER, MING THE MORON, TO HIS SECRET 'HIDE-AWAY' PLANET AS PROGRAMMED!
SAY WHAT?
BUT I YAM NOT MING, YOU DIVVY! WAIT UP!
RIGHT! YOU YAM MING THE MORON! DO NOT WORRY, MING, YOU YAM GOIN' TO BE YOKAY!
WE YAM APPROACHING YOUR HIDE-AWAY, MING! GIVE THE SECRET PASSWORD THAT OPENS THE AIR-LOCK!
PASSWORD?.. WHAT PASSWORD? I DONT KNOW ANY PASSWORD..
HURRY!
ERM... AGRACADOO-DA... UM... IGRACADIB DAB.. DIB DABA DI DOH.. ER... DOODIKADABRA..
WELL... HERE WE ARE! HAVE A NICE DAY!
AB.. DAH..
AMB..
DAMBAB HAB
ACK..
BHA..
WOW! THIS LOOKS ALRIGHT! I FINK I GOIN' LIKE IT HERE...
GREETINGS, MING! ALL IS PREPARED JUST AS YOU ORDERED!
CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING...? LAGER... PIE 'N CHIPS...?
WAIT
WOW!
THAT MING SURE KNOWS HOW TO BE COMFORTABLE...
HEY! DIS GUY NOT MING!
TOO RIGHT!
HE IMPOSTING! MEBBE WE OUGHTA OFF HIM..
TOO RIGHT!
HOW?
GUN?
POISON?
BOTH?
Y'CAN'T TRUST MACHINES, EH? YO!

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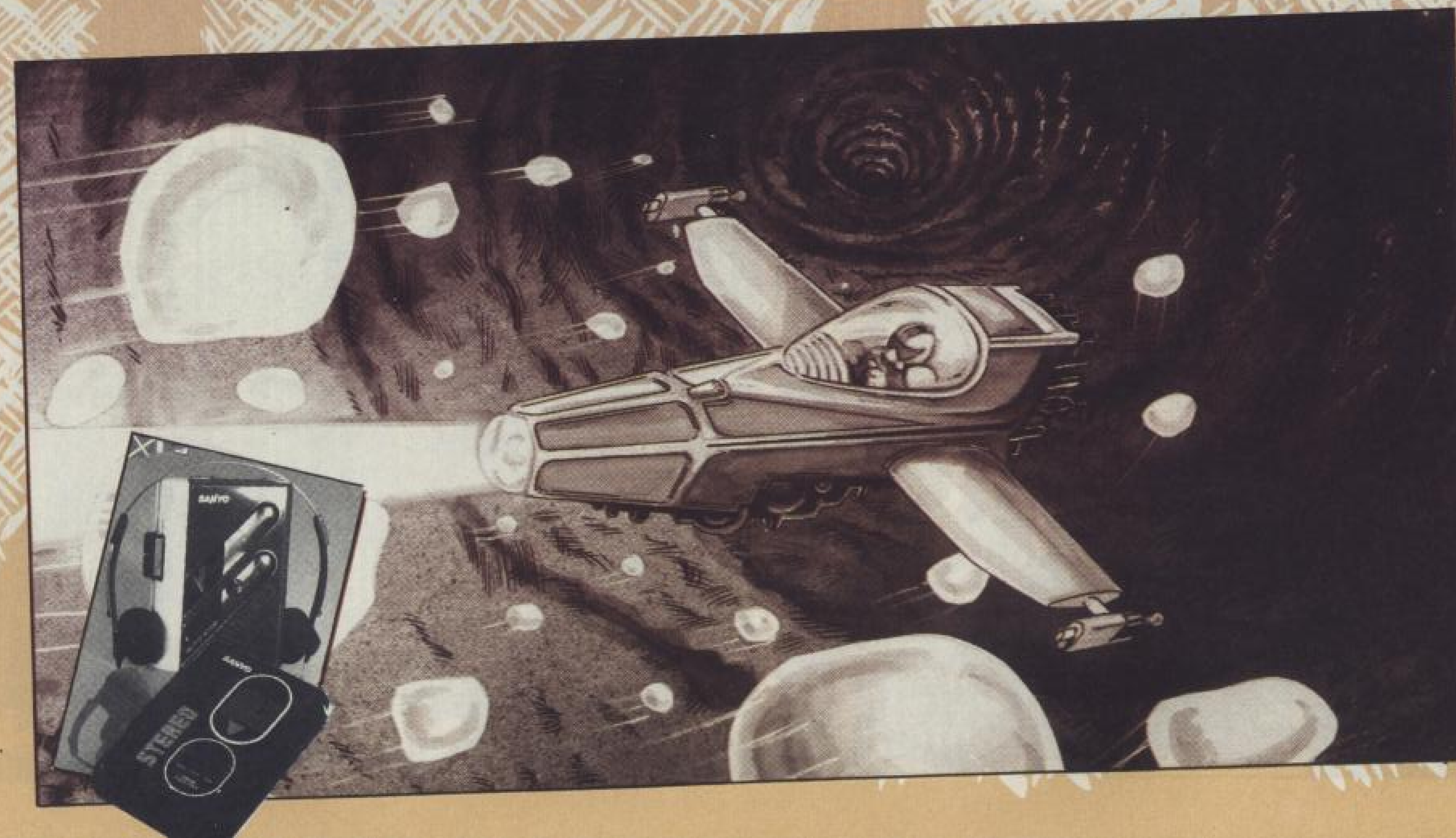
### DNA WARRIOR

is the latest, and most definitely the wierdest game from Yorkshire-based Cascade Games. It begins with you sitting at the controls of a microscopic submersible about to be injected into the body of a scientist who (rather stupidly, I thought) has had a second brain implanted as an experiment. As one might expect this second brain is playing up a bit, and you've got to find and destroy it. For a more in-depth look you might try Previews, where whatshisname waffles on about it and how like the movie *Fantastic Voyage* it is. Personally I think *Innerspace* is more like it.

Anyway it's clearly a tough task, and one I personally wouldn't want to undertake. I'm quite happy to sit in my broom cupboard with my feet up and the TV on, a cup of tea in one hand and a choccy biccy in the other. The only bit of excitement is the competitions and Cascade ones are always the most fun. Anything to do with that PR person Liz Sandey is inevitably pretty whacky and this was no exception. I think just I about doubled the Newsfield phone bill chatting away to her – it's lucky editors don't usually read comps pages – but at least we've got some good prizes for you lot.

The first prize is a ghettoblaster (not yet specified, now where's my Argos catalogue . . . ?), hopefully better than the one used in the CRASH office which plays tapes about half-speed (a Sony CFS-212L – irate CRASH team). Second prize for the next two names out of the rather battered old hat is a personal cassette player (*still* not specified – now where the hell is my Argos catalogue?!). There are also fifty copies of *DNA Warrior* up for grabs as a third prize.

To get your hands on one of these superb prizes it's 'I Want To Tell You A Story' time. So if you are sitting comfortably with pens and pieces of paper in hand, I would like you to imagine that *you're* the DNA Warrior on his mission to save the scientist's life. In no more than 200 words I would like you to describe your journey through the body, and the ultimate destruction of the dangerous organ. The usual rules and regulations set out in the masthead apply (that's the bit on the Contents pages), and please send all entries to us by the March 2 or I'll send Tiddles round to sort you out. The crucial (aargh they've got me saying it now!) address is I AIN'T GOT NO BODY, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.



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# CHARTS and SCORES

## THE FEBRUARY CHARTS

### TOP 20 GAMES

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1(▶) | **ROBOCOP** *Ocean* | **Stuart Wynne**, CRASH Towers | **89600** |
| 2(▶) | **THUNDER BLADE** *US Gold* | **Steve Young**, Glasgow | **241250** |
| 3(▶) | **BATMAN** *Ocean* | **Mark Hopwood**, Winchester | **100%/68%** |
| 4(▶) | **OPERATION WOLF** *Ocean* | **Robert Campion**, Exeter | **356050** |
| 5(▶) | **R-TYPE** *Electric Dreams* | **David Gordon**, Nottingham | **64300** |
| 6(▶) | **TOTAL ECLIPSE** *Incentive* | **Bryan Kershaw**, Bolton | **498100** |
| 7(▶) | **AFTERBURNER** *Activision* | **Mark Townsend**, Brighton | **1346500** |
| 8(▶) | **DOUBLE DRAGON** *Melbourne House* | **James Farmer**, North London | **78500** |
| 9(▶) | **DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE** *Ocean* | **Andrew Wilson**, Romford | **7240** |
| 10(▶) | **RETURN OF THE JEDI** *Domark* | **Jaco Cebula**, Dumfermline | **65000** |
| 11(▶) | **SAVAGE** *Firebird* | **Jason Dunbar**, Shrewsbury | **2240** |
| 12(▶) | **FOXX FIGHTS BACK** *Imageworks* | **Philip Brown**, Reading | **97150** |
| 13(▶) | **19 PART ONE – BOOT CAMP** *Cascade* | **Chris Wright**, Southampton | **92250** |
| 14(▶) | **INTENSITY** *Firebird* | **J Roberts**, Bristol | **1750050** |
| 15(▶) | **CYBERNOID II** *Hewson* | **Gregory Lett**, Stoke Newington | **70456** |
| 16(▶) | **PAC-MANIA** *Grandslam* | **John Spencer**, Ipswich | **86750** |
| 17(▶) | **JOE BLADE II** *Players* | **Carl Scott**, Hull | **74000** |
| 18(▶) | **TARGET; RENEGADE** *Imagine* | **A Adema**, Haarlem, HOLLAND | **1749650** |
| 19(▶) | **MATCH DAY II** *Ocean* | **F Teodàsai**, Ferreira, PORTUGAL | **9-0** |
| 20(▶) | **BIONIC COMMANDO** *US Gold* | **T Krallis**, Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA | **322976** |

### TOP 10 MUSIC

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1(▶) | **LED STORM** *US Gold* | *Tim Follen* |
| 2(▶) | **JOE BLADE II** *Players* | *Gary Biasillo* |
| 3(▶) | **BIONIC COMMANDO** *GO!/Capcom* | *Tim Follen* |
| 4(▶) | **CYBERNOID** *Hewson* | *Dave Rogers* |
| 5(▶) | **AMAUROTE** *Mastertronic* | *Dave Whittaker* |
| 6(▶) | **ROBOCOP** *Ocean* | *Jonathan Dunn* |
| 7(▶) | **PAC-MANIA** *Grandslam* | *Ben Daglish* |
| 8(▶) | **CYBERNOID II** *Hewson* | *Dave Rogers* |
| 9(▶) | **TARGET; RENEGADE** *Imagine* | *Gary Biasillo* |
| 10(▶) | **OPERATION WOLF** *Ocean* | *Jonathan Dunn* |

### TOP 10 VIDEOS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1(▶) | **ROBOCOP** *Virgin* | *Peter Weller returns soon in RoboCop II* |
| 2(▶) | **E.T.** *CIC* | *Relive Spielberg's alien extravaganza* |
| 3(▶) | **PREDATOR** *CBS/Fox* | *Schwarzenegger tackles a jungle alien* |
| 4(2) | **PLATOON** *RCA/Columbia* | *Oliver Stone's 'Nam memories on film* |
| 5(4) | **FULL METAL JACKET** *Warner* | *Kubrick's alternative look at Vietnam* |
| 6(▶) | **THE UNTOUCHABLES** *CIC* | *Connery in an Oscar-winning performance* |
| 7(1) | **ALIENS** *CBS/Fox* | *Watch out, she's behind you!* |
| 8(3) | **LETHAL WEAPON** *Warner* | *Crazy cop action from Mel Gibson* |
| 9(▶) | **DIRTY DANCING** *Vestron* | *Voted 1988 Video of the Year* |
| 10(7) | **A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 3** *Warner* | *Only in your wildest dreams* |

▶ *Please note that as the Games Chart has been revamped – by our new up-to-date enforcement service – and the Music Chart is new, the last month figures are slightly (well, entirely) useless. All will be revealed next month (we hope!). More information on how to vote for The Charts and about the Scores system is contained on page 94.*



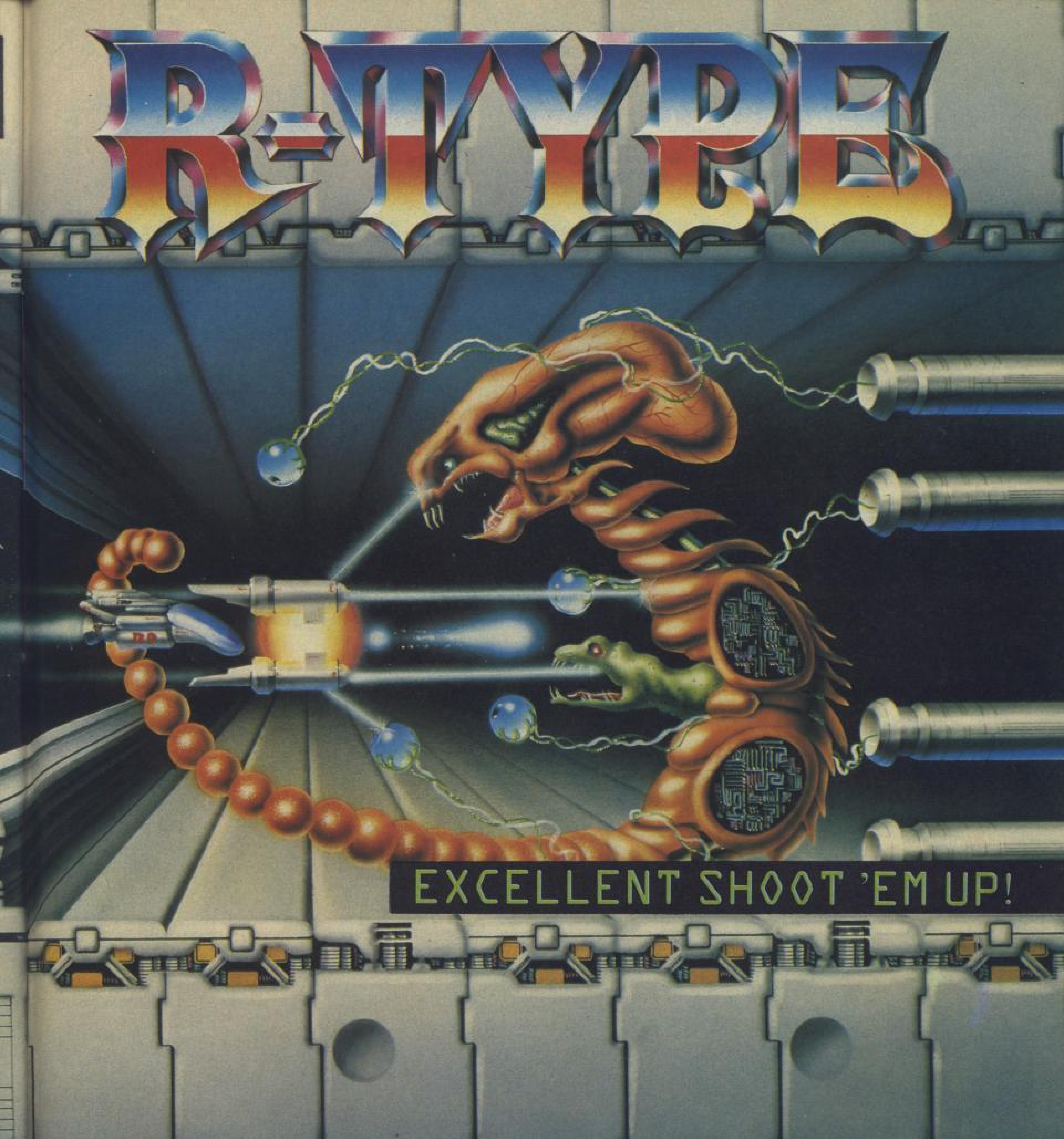

# IT'S YOUR O

R-TYPE

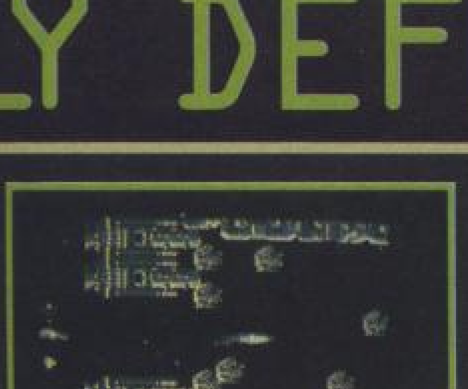
'ST version looks identical to the arcade version . . .
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Commodore 64 screen shots shown



Spectrum screen shots shown

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# CRASH HYPERMARKET




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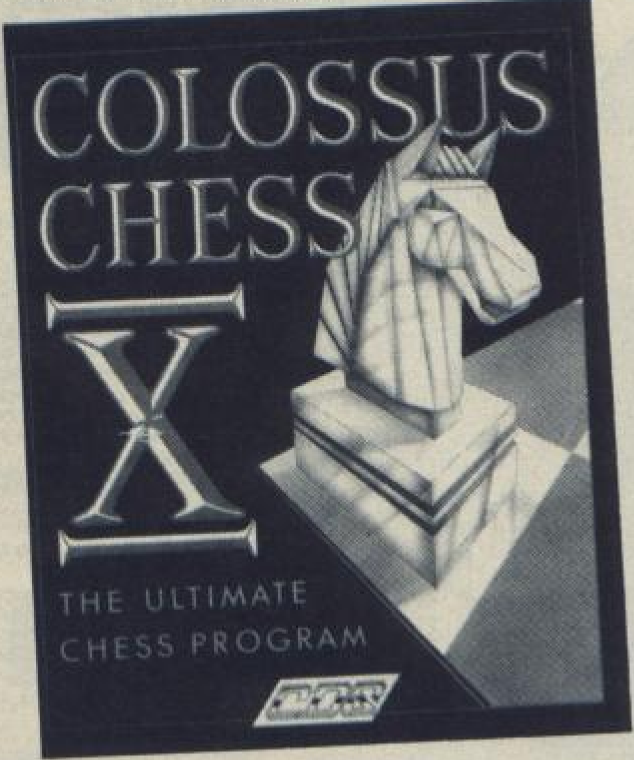
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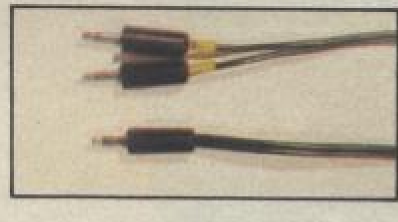
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| **4 SOCCER SIMULATORS cass** | *Codemasters* | £ 7.24 | C307C |
| **AFTERBURNER cass** | *Activision* | £10.44 | C263C |
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| **BARBARIAN II cass** | *Palace* | £ 7.99 | C304C |
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| **MINI-PUTT cass** | *Electronic Arts* | £ 7.20 | C259C |
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| **NETHERWORLD cass** | *Hewson* | £ 6.40 | C305C |
| **NETHERWORLD disk** | *Hewson* | £10.40 | C305D |
| **OPERATION WOLF cass** | *Ocean* | £ 6.40 | C256C |
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| **POWERPLAY cass** | *Players* | £ 1.99 | C300C |
| **PRO SKATEBOARD SIM cass** | *Codemasters* | £ 1.99 | C401C |
| **R-TYPE cass** | *Electric Dreams* | £ 7.99 | C251C |
| **RETURN OF THE JEDI cass** | *Domark* | £ 7.95 | C404C |




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| **RETURN OF THE JEDI disk** | *Domark* | £11.95 | C404D |
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| **REX disk** | *Martech* | £11.99 | C257D |
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| **ROBOCOP disk** | *Ocean* | £11.95 | C262D |
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| **TEN MEGA GAMES disk** | *Gremlin Graphics* | £11.99 | C411D |
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| **THE IN CROWD disk** | *Ocean* | £14.45 | C420D |
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| **THUNDER BLADE disk** | *US Gold* | £10.44 | C255D |
| **TOTAL ECLIPSE cass** | *Incentive* | £ 7.95 | C307C |




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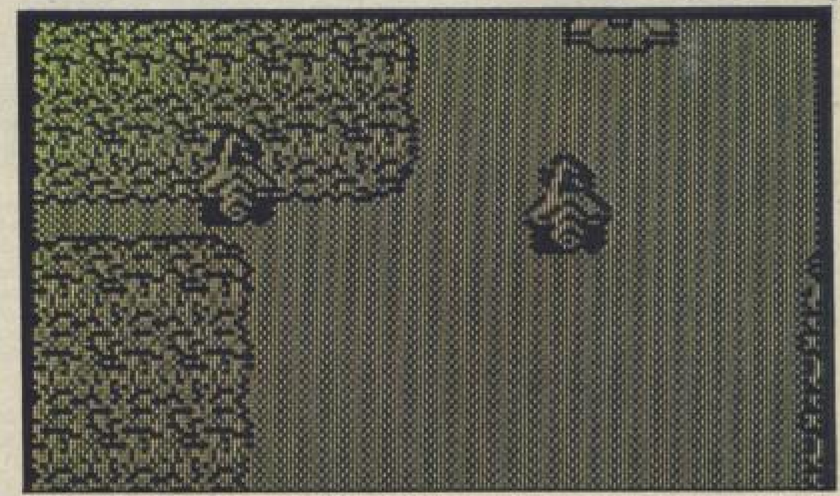
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# BACK NUMBERS

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*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACK*
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACK*

**No 4 May 1984**
The Quill analysed! The fabled ZX Microdrive appears! Run It Again: Pengo games! Graphics utilities! Living Guide: boardgames, simulations, strategy, adventure!
**No 17 June 1985**
Denton Designs! Sinclair Story 3! Maps: Knight Lore, Underwurlde! Leonardo graphics! Datel sound sampler! Artist: David Thorpe!
**No 18 July 1985**
Gremlin Graphics profile! Artist: Bob Wakelin! Map: Gyron Atrium!
**No 19 August 1985**
CRL profile! Oliposter! Round-up of Basic compilers! Artist: Rich Shenfield! Maps: Dynamite Dan, Shadowfire!
**No 20 September 1985**
Electronic Pencil Company profile! Maps: Alien 8, Dun Darach!
**No 21 October 1985**
Holografix profile! Holograms! Map: Nodes Of Yesod! Platinum Productions profile!

**No 22 November 1985**
Fanzine File! Microdrive tips! Artist: Susan Rowe! Fantasy gamesbooks!
**No 23 December 1985**
Melbourne House! Computer graphics! Artist: Dave Beeson!
**No 24 Xmas 1985/86**
Artist: Oliver Frey! Gargoyle Games profile! Lloyd's Lookback! Hewson profile!
**No 25 February 1986**
Durell profile! Microsphere! FORTH and extensions to ZX BASIC!
**No 26 March 1986**
St Bride's profile! Spectrum 128! Micronet 800! Multiface 1!
**No 27 April 1986**
Playing Tips supplement! Mel Croucher! Imagine profile! PBM convention!
**No 28 May 1986**
Fanzines! Martech profile! Composite Video Interface! SpecDrum!
**No 29 June 1986**
First PBM Mailbox! Homegrown software! Realtime profile! Maps: Cylu, Sir Fred, Saboteur, Tantalus!
**No 30 July 1986**
Birth Of A Game! Laser Genius! Maps: Tantalus, Movie!
**No 31 August 1986**
Software Projects! Word Processing! Maps: Pentagram, Heavy On The Magick!
**No 32 September 1986**
Programmer: Dave Perry! GAC! Maps: Core, Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Bobby Bearing! Echo Synthesizer!
**No 33 October 1986**
Programmers: Jon Ritman, Costa Panayi! Maps: Dan Dare, Cauldron II! SpecDrumming!
**No 34 November 1986**
Programmer: Don Priestley! Genesis Update! Maps: Dynamite Dan II, Equinox, Universal Hero! Music Machine!
**No 35 December 1986**
Designer: Dan Malone! Computer Advertising! Maps: Glider Rider, Thrust, Lightforce! MIDI!
**No 36 Xmas 1986/87**
Lloyd's Lookback! Spectrum Music! Maps: Scooby Doo, Heartland, Druid!
**No 37 February 1987**
John Richardson: Jetman! CRASH Reviewers revealed! Match Day Challenge! Maps: Fairlight II, Firelord, Avenger, Dandy!
**No 38 March 1987**
Fanzines! Designer: Bernie Drummond! Maps: Cobra, Impossaball, Uridium! MIDI!
**No 39 April 1987**
Arcades Update! The Z88! Programmer: Steve Taylor! Maps: Nosferatu, Double Take, Future Knight, Feud!
**No 40 May 1987**
Playing Tips supplement! Maps: Short Circuit, Antiriad, Conquest, Into The Eagle's Nest, Sceptre Of Bagdad, Dragon's Lair II, Thrust II, Fat Worm Blows A Sparky, Tarzan, Aliens!
**No 41 June 1987**
Programmer: Mike Singleton! Industry Today! Adventure Trail supplement! Maps: Saboteur II, Head Over Heels! Multitrackers! 128 Bugs!
**No 43 August 1987**
The +3 arrives! Run It Again runs the Gauntlet clones! CRL's 3D Gamemaker! Maps: Enduro Racer, Flash Gordon!
**No 44 September 1987**
Programmer: David Aubrey-Jones on Mercenary! The Sega Master System! Tech Tips: that Swift Disc! Maps: Vampire, The Curse Of Sherwood!
**No 45 October 1987**
Run It Again: the kick-'em-ups! The CRASH History Part One! The Budget Boooooom! Maps: Game Over, Wonder Boy!
**No 46 November 1987**
16-page 3D section and glasses! Graphics and Sound Specialists! Maps: Exolon, Panzadrome, Mutants!
**No 47 December 1987**
16-page Judge Death pull-out! 2000AD's Odyssey! Every Tie-In Ever Made! Run It Again: Those Racing Games! The Christmas List! Maps: Indiana Jones, Dizzy!
**No 48 Xmas 1987/88 (January 1988)**
Pull-out poster! The CRASH Directory! Going To Bed With CRASH! A second helping of 3D! Maps: Yogi Bear, Mercenary, Tai-Pan!
**No 49 February 1988**
Level 9 profile! Last Part of CRASH History! Flying Tonight – British Airways' flight simulators! Maps: Wizball, Thundercats, Athena!
**No 50 March 1988**
16-page Tech Niche supplement focusing on hardware and utilities! Write Your Own Adventures – GAC versus PAW! Maps: Platoon, Andy Capp Handy, Garfield, Driller!
**No 51 April 1988**
The Best Of British – Ultimate! Strategy Special! Run It Again – the world of 3D games! Maps: Dark Sceptre, Platoon (levels 2 & 3)! More MIDI!
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Thunder Blade and LED Storm! 5 Crash Smashes! Special 32-page Playing Tips section! Comics reviewed! Programmers on programmers! Eurovision – European software! The Xmas Puzzle pages! Mastering the game – a beginner's guide to fantasy roleplaying! Computers in TV!

**No 60 January 1989**
What! Another Sneak Preview Tape! This time featuring Ocean's Batman and Firebird's Savage as playable demos! The Afterburner Story leaflet! 2 Crash Smashes! LM's 1988 Lookback! Sticks in the Mud – joystick reviewed! Collectable Consumables – compilation reviewed!

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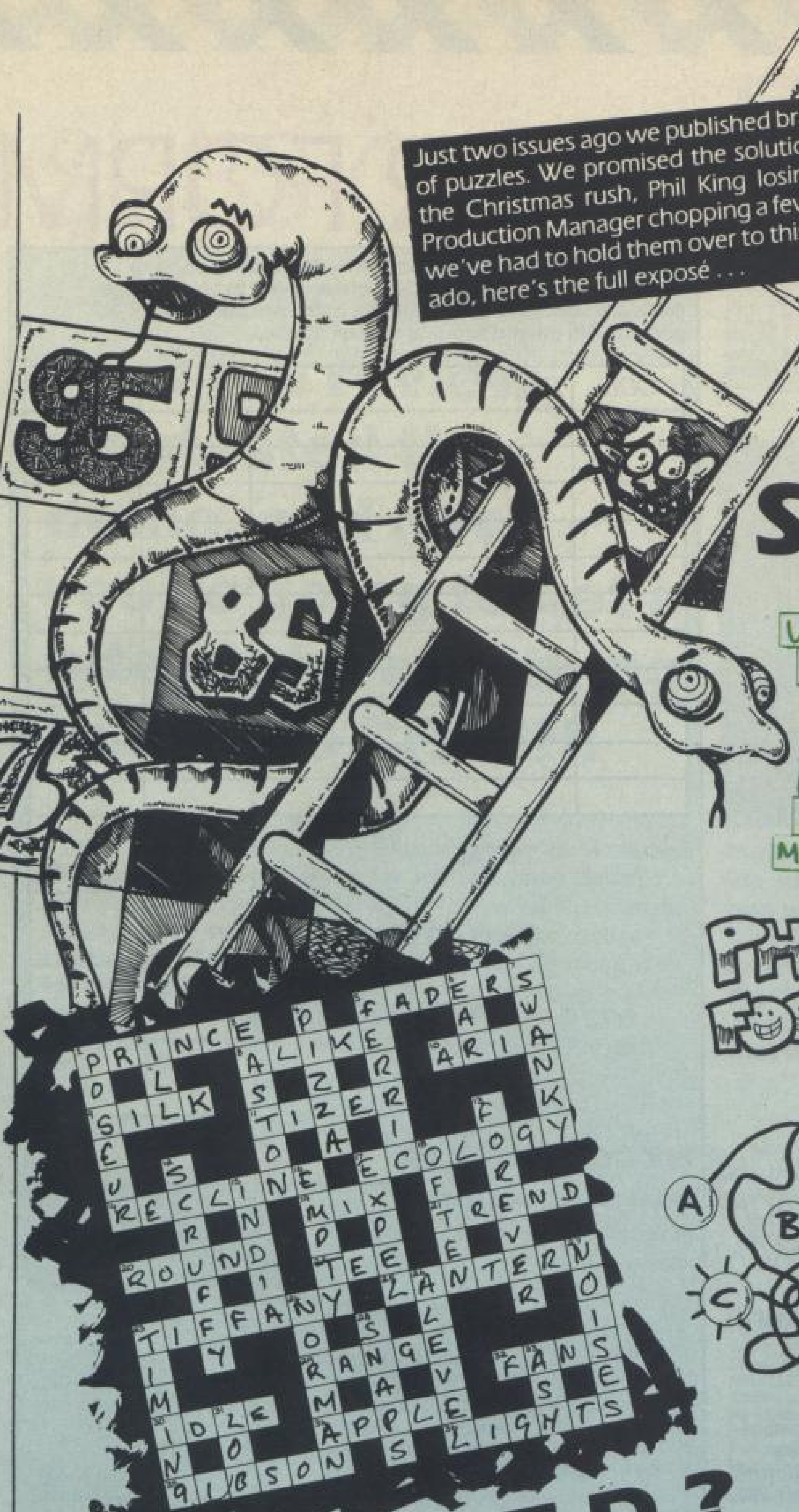
Just two issues ago we published brain cell-packed 16 pages of puzzles. We promised the solutions last issue, but due to the Christmas rush, Phil King losing the answers and the Production Manager chopping a few pages off the allocation, we've had to hold them over to this issue. So without further ado, here's the full exposé . . .

# THE SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

## DROP 'EM (AND THEN PICK THEM UP AGAIN)!

URSINE
REINS
SIRE
IRE
RICE
CRIME
METRIC

## PUZZLED?




## PHILZ FOOTY!




## THE NEW CRASH ZX SPECTRUM CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

```
J R O T I D E R M S L F I L I U R K M O I U T G M
C H I E E J L H I F M E H N D S D Q X J E T M A N
R I T N A M E N O E G A S A L A I A M H B L T U H
X L S P K E C R L D A L A W O L D U L R P E O S P
A V T H N L E G L I Y X R H E S T N E S E R P O A
I A N K A C R F E D Y L C T N E R S E R E A C P U
I O A I O O U R I N G R D E S A K H E L G O E K A
T A R M U W A R T N N W S T R E M T E R B R T B T
N T A C I M E U A E R E O S C D E A S O H A O Y U
A S H S I M A M T A B L A I V T E I R C E D Y E S
A E K I N S W K N O T T T R C Y S F O E R E S L E
R K I G I O S A V M A S S X A T R H E A M V A R H
G E R H N U R E X P N C E E I P E S R O T A J R L
E R N S A N R B E J C H I O P T L E N E L I C E M
I E W O O W N E T K I M F A A L M G Z A L B E G N
V X R E D R H C A E N E U P S R A A T H E H O E O
O N J O O S I C S U G R R T R A W I E H P T S U G
M A R I A N O I L O A Z A W E S M K A T L O N R U
O F S E V E R L M R C E A N W T A X Y W A R I K B
L F T O N P Y E N O U O I D E R T E R A C T A Y I
A I E A R T I S T E P R G S I K V Y A E S A M D L
S T N E L L K L A W V C N I Y P A Z Z E H R B D O
R A T D S E R R N U E I B L E S U L N L E T O E W
X N L O R E B O T C O A M U R T C E P S A N A R J
E I C A T E R A E F A D E C L L I V A N S L L K J
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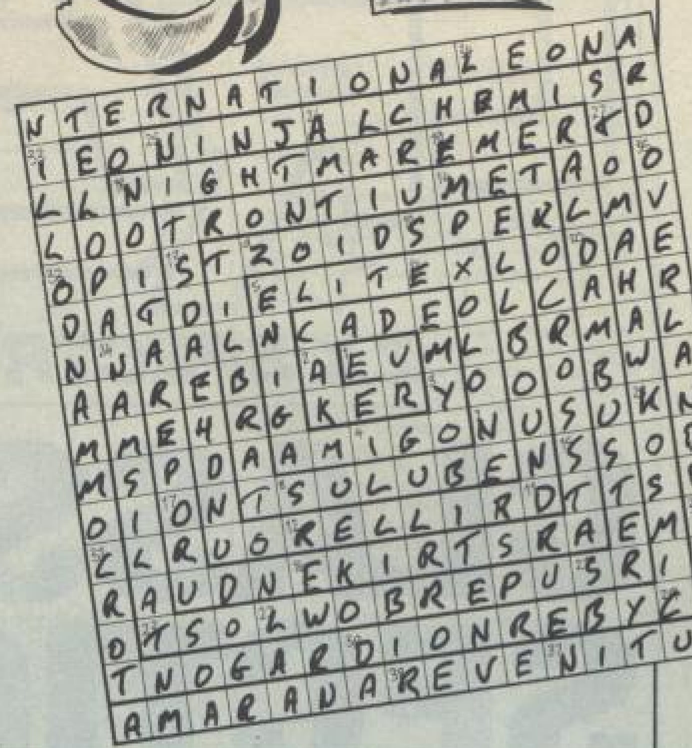
## WHAT ARE THEY LIKE?

| | COMPUTER: SPECTRUM | COMMODORE 64 | AMSTRAD | ATARI | AMIGA | AGE: 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | FAVE GAME: ARCADE ADVENTURE | ADVENTURE | SHOOT-'EM-UP | SPORTS SIMULATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ADAM | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ |
| BRENDA | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |
| COLIN | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |
| DAVID | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ |
| LIZ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ |
| ARCADE ADVENTURE | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | | | | |
| ADVENTURE | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | | | | |
| SHOOT-'EM-UP | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | | | | |
| SPORTS SIMULATION | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | | | | |
| STRATEGY | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | | | | |
| 12 | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | |

# MAMMOTH CROSSWORD



# Santa's SOFTWARE SPIRAL



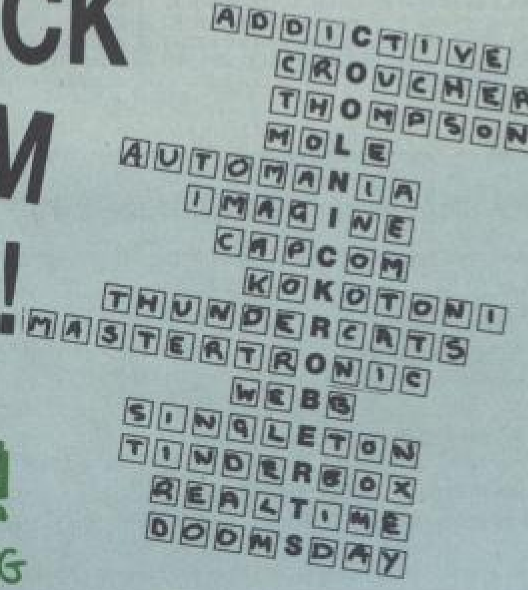
## CRAZY CRASH ANSWERS

**1** 45 seconds (we've seen it done!).
**2** Approximately 4½ days (in a good week)!
**3** Because the aerial was broken! (Groan, that joke's even older than Lloyd's Hermes typewriter – no doubt Jimmy Tarbuck will be using it on *Live From The Palladium* (the joke not the typewriter!)).
**4** 14400. (We're told he even says it in his sleep!)
**5** None – Mark hasn't made any records! (Oh alright, James Brown's contain two – one per side.)
**6** 20 seconds (fat chance!).
**7** So big that it won't fit through the letter box!
**8** About 29 hours! (Lloyd was hoping for a brand new word processor for Christmas – I wonder if he'll be happy enough with the deluxe paper bag the Art Department have made him?)
**9** We don't know because he broke the weighing scales!
**10** d) all three. (I'm not too sure about the first two but the third is definitely correct!)

# DOUBLE CROSS-WORD



# STACK 'EM HIGH!




# COR BLIMEY! IT'S PHIL KING







## WHACKY WORDS

1 sodden (sudden)
2 ceased (seized)
3 mattered (muttered)
4 rowed (rode)
5 flours (flowers)
6 embellished (embarrassed)
7 facia (face)
8 beetle (beetroot)
9 worked (walked)
10 grin (green)
11 moss (mess)
12 axed (asked)
13 bog (bag)
14 socked (soaked)
15 nether (never)
16 battle (bottle)
17 slept (slipped)
18 spelt (spilt)
19 elapsed (collapsed)
20 eight (nine)

CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM

# CLASSIFIED SECTION

## WANTED

**Wanted**: ZX Speccy 48K printer. Send details to Alan Doherty, 74 Gartmore Road, Paisley, Scotland PA1 3NQ – or – phone 041 889 5604. Do it now!

**WANTED!** Crash Tech Tape in good condition pay £6 or swap for all of: Dark Star, On the Run and Return of the Things. Phone Steve on Exeter (0392) 76646 after 5pm.

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**For Sale** Spectrum 48K+, Snapshot II backing up device, Quickshot II, joystick, tape recorder, loadsa games including Platoon, Gauntlet, Star Wars, Bombjack, Ghosts & Goblins. Worth over £500 will sell for £120. Phone Bryan on 0737 221444.

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**Spectrum 128+2**, only 2½ months old, with over £1300 of games, many recent titles. Must be sold, worth £1500, sell for £650. Write to Jason Neat, 3 Cook's Lea, Eastry, Nr Sandwich, Kent CT13 0LR.

**FOR SALE** +2, disk drive, Plus D, and over £200's woth of software. All in mint condition and with their manuals only for around £350's. Phone 0671 2265 any time after four. Millions of mags if wanted.

**Spectrum 128K +2** under one year old. Cheetah joystick, Kempston and £150 worth of games. All for £100 or near offer. Phone 01 653 2116 after 5pm.

**Speccy games** all original, 48k, 128k with some new titles e.g. Road Blasters, California Games, Gold Silver Bronze, 720 and Out Run. Send SAE for list to Craig, 6 Uckington Cottage, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY4 4UL.

**Spectrum 128K+2** for sale as new. Over £500 software such as Typhoon, Ghost and Goblins, Ikari Warriors, free Cheetah joystick, 4 year guarantee left. A bargain at £275 ono. Phone David on Liss 0730 893213 after 6pm (Hurry!).

**Spectrum 128+2**, Kempston interface, Quickshot joystick, software worth over £650 and a few magazines. Altogether worth about £850 will sell for £300 ono. Phone 01 561 2246 anytime.

**+3**, good condition, 125+ joystick, loads of disks, tapes like Where Time Stood Still, Firefly, Match Day II, Solid Gold and many more. Mags also. Phone David after 4pm on 0705 812330 with decent offers (£160+).

**Speccy +3**, Multiface 3, joystick, adaptor lead, tape recorder, adaptor lead, £150 of software, recent, lockable disk box, offers £300. Write to Mat, Stonehouse Farm, Wickham St. Pauls, Halstead, Essex CO9 2PX. Hurry! It'll go fast.

**Spectrum +3**, joystick, 14 games on disk including Bard's Tale, Leaderboard, Gauntlet, Winter Games; cassette lead, tapes, mags, manuals. 2 months old, still boxed, only £150. Hurry! Phone: Adam (01) 204 4425.

**Crash back issues** 1-10 £3 – 10-50 £1.30 – Xmas Issues £2. Write to D J Holdstock, 17 Wellesley Avenue, Deal, Kent. Inc. P+P.

**Games** for sale. No game over £3. Send SAE to Paul Thompson, 46 Highland Road, Maidstone, Kent for a complete list.

**Spectrum + 48K**, Multiface 128, games, mags, telly, joystick, tape recorder, joystick interface. Phone Leeds (0532) 774466. Please ask for Jason. Only £150.00. Or write to: Jason Crosswaite, 17 Throstle St, Middleton, Leeds LS10 4JD.

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# THE PBM GAME THAT NEVER WAS

**A couple of new PBM games delight IAN LACEY this month, but only after all the grovelling apologies have been made over games misnamed, games that don't exist, interviews missed . . .**

**FIRST OFF** I must apologize for the mistake in last month's column. ***Warlord*** is ***Casus-Belli II*** and *Crucible Of Power* does not exist! After announcing that *Casus-Belli II* would be called *Crucible Of Power*, **KJC Games** then changed the name again (to *Warlord*) without any formal announcement. Their fault, not mine, honest! I must also apologize to those who looked forward (myself included) to the **Project Basilisk** interview, mentioned in the Christmas issue, I had banked on them attending the **Northern Convention**, which they did not. My fault this time, but an interview will appear shortly.

## SPAGHETTI GANGSTERS

The new PBM company **On The Brink**, first mentioned in Issue 60 with their futuristic sport game *Skullball*, are now launching their second game. Called ***Mobster***, this is a humorous game involving mafia bosses set in San Corrupto, a fictitious American city of The Thirties which has just broken free of the mafia boss, Vito Spaghetti. Your aim is to replace him by eliminating seven other players with similar ambitions. After that you must wipe out Elliott Mess and his incorruptible 'unmentionables'.

The game is simple to play but contains twenty different orders and some nice little complexities designed to keep all the mob bosses on their toes. It's like *It's A Crime*, only funnier, easier and cheaper at £1 per turn for 14 orders. £2.50 will get you a start-up package and two turns. Turns are a regular eight days (UK) or 15 days (Europe). Contact *On The Brink*, **Brink House, 18 Salvin Close, Cropwell Bishop, Nottingham NG12 3DZ.**

## DOUBLE VISION

***Spiral Arms II*** is now in the strange position of being run simultaneously by two UK companies. Apparently both, **Sloth Enterprises** and **Spellbinder Games**, have bought the rights from the American **Graaf Simulations**. Both UK versions have now been launched and have a few differences, mainly price. Sloth have decided to run the game on an increasing turn fee. Start-up and the first two turns come free, turns 3 to 10 cost £1.50, turns 11 to 20 cost £2 and turns 20+ cost £2.50. Spellbinder, however have opted for a set turn fee of £1.50 which works out a lot cheaper if you play to the end (around 40 turns).

The Sloth version of *Spiral Arm II* has been streamlined, however, and several of the more complex aspects re-written. Spellbinder's program remains almost identical to Graaf Simulations' version. Having not seen Spellbinder's rulebook I can only comment on Sloth's attempt, which is pretty impressive, with nice some pictures of Clangers! The rules are easy to follow and nicely structured allowing you to make a fast and unconfused start. The game itself is all about conquering the galaxy! Original concept, hey? I'd be glad to hear from anyone playing both games, which is best. Contact Sloth at **PO BOX 82, Southampton SO9 7FG** and Spellbinder at **PO BOX 60, Wath-upon-Dearne, Rotherham, S Yorks S63 7PR.**

**No promises for next month (because I invariably get it wrong), so just wait and see . . .**

---

# COMMS

**Bemoaning his lack of space – for just one game-packed issue – PAUL EVANS takes us on a quick tour of what's new on-line**

**ONE OF** the biggest establishments in the world of computer training, **ITEC** has just launched a new on-line service providing all kinds of SIGs for everything from building to teaching! It's pretty vague what the actual system contains but if you wish to try it, it's free and open 24 hours a day on (0642) 219704. The system requires scrolling software and a 300/300 baud modem. To learn more, phone **Graham Robinson** on (0642) 232550 ext. 20.

## SHINE ON YOU CRAZY DIAMOND!

Another board has recently been launched, called **Diamond Viewdata**. It's a general information board, with a few SIGs, and is run on Ruby-Tel, an Amiga package. When I took a poke around, there was not much open and the frames were not very imaginative to say the least! Diamond promises information on builders, motoring, restaurants, florists, dental services (?), golf clubs, car hire and many more, as the blurb points out. See what you think anyway, it's viewdata standard on 0923-228558.

## BETTER SERVICE

If you are a member of the home shopping system, **Shop-Tv**, then you may of guessed that it has connections with the new catalogue shop, **Index**. Because of this new link-up, warehouse services have been improved and there is a seven day promise on all items and free delivery!

## +3 PROBLEMS

It's a shame that the +3 expansion bus was redesigned to make sure it would be incompatible with everything in the universe. I've just had another letter, this time from Mr PV Salvage, asking how he could get his VTX 5000 modem to work with it. Unfortunately there's no way, due to the re-arranged power lines – you'll have to get a new modem. Issue 54 had a look at one such item, the Spectre Comms pack from **Spectre Comms Ltd, The Old School House, Tenter Row, Crosby, Ravensworth, Penrith, Cumbria CA310 3JA.** Their telephone number is 0931 5362 and the pack is £49.95, also available with a Tandata QMOD for £99.95.

**Ok, next time we shall be looking at a few other boards that are available for us. Don't forget to send info on your board if you run one! Tra!**

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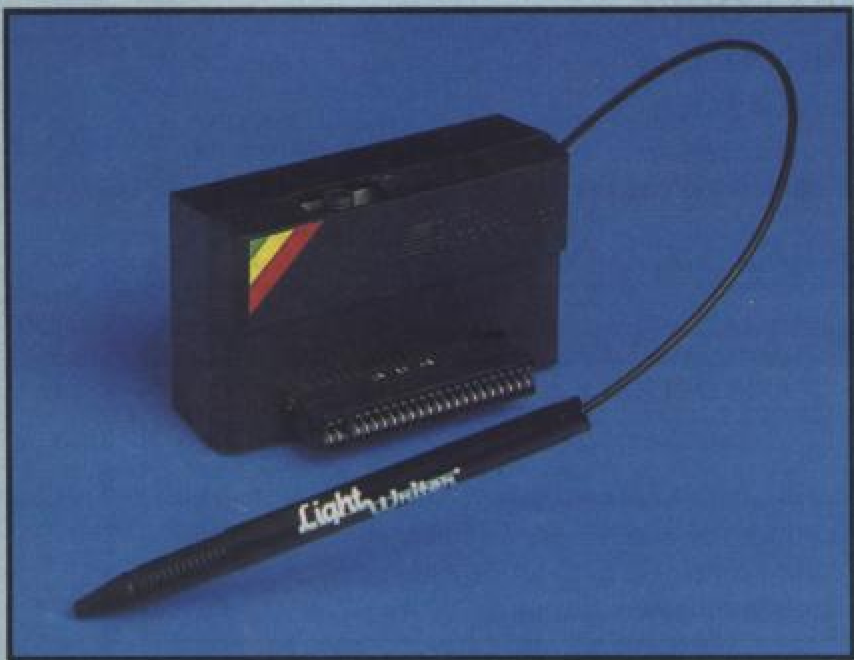
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**Many other magazines are carrying this voting form. It means the results will truly be democratic, and therefore really mean a lot to those who receive them.**

**The votes will be collated by an independent company, to whom you should post your voting form, and the awards will be presented at the Computer Leisure Industry's 'get together' — Computer Arena — in March 1989.**

**So, simply fill-in the voting form below, cut it out (or photocopy it) and send it to:**

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Closing date 25th Feb'89

1) Please tick the computer format you are voting for:

- AMIGA ☐
- AMSTRAD CPC ☐
- ELECTRON ☐
- COMMODORE 64/128 ☐
- PC COMPATIBLES ☐
- ATARI ST ☐
- SPECTRUM ☐

3) Please state what you consider to be the **BEST GAME OVERALL** of 1988:

4) Which Software House do you choose as being the most consistent in producing high quality computer games during 1988:

2) Please name your choice of best game (from the format ticked above) of 1988:

**1. Best ARCADE game**

**2. Best ADVENTURE game**

**3. Best STRATEGY/WAR game**

**4. Best MUSIC with game**

**5. Best USE OF GRAPHICS**

**Name** ........................................

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Et Al

# GOGGLE!

***Douglas is double-billed!!***



No doubts who this month belongs to: since from CBS/Fox we have ***Wall Street*** (15), and from CIC Video ***Fatal Attraction*** (18). Starring in both is **Michael Douglas** whose mesmeric performance in the former won him the best actor Oscar. The irony of the film is that *Platoon* director **Oliver Stone** wrote the script as an old-fashioned morality tale, with Douglas as an evil stock broker corrupting protégé **Charlie Sheen**. In the event Douglas's powerful performance had American audiences cheering as he declared 'Greed is good'. By contrast, Sheen seems weak and ineffectual, damaging a good, if flawed movie.

**Adrian Lyne**'s *Fatal Attraction* stirred controversy over its anti-feminist depiction of **Glenn Close** as independent career woman turned monster, but there's no doubting its power as a thriller. Once again Douglas turns in some great acting, this time as a weak-willed family man whose weekend affair with Close starts her fatal obsession.

By contrast ***The Unbearable Lightness Of Being*** (18, CIC Video) is, at three hours, a much less strongly-driven film and with frequent nudity unlikely to be as popular family viewing. Nevertheless the obsession this time is with freedom, independence and love rather than violent vengeance.

Firmly back in the mainstream we have **Sir Richard Attenborough**'s ***Cry Freedom*** (CIC Video). Set in South Africa this tells the story of native journalist





Donald Woods, a white man who becomes sympathetic to black activist Steve Biko. Based on a true story it's a pity that, due to problems in getting finance, the film follows Woods and his escape from S Africa rather than Biko, who was eventually murdered by the S African police. With several spectacular recreations of such infamous events as the 1976 Soweto massacre this big-budget film should prove popular on rental.

A moral tale on a smaller scale is told by ***The Principal*** (18, RCA/Columbia). The eponymous hero is **James Belushi** who, with security guard **Louis Gossett Jr** and history teacher **Rae Dawn Chong**, sets about turning the city's toughest school into a model of scholastic achievement.

Firmly resisting moralizing of any type whatsoever we also have ***Police Academy 5*** (PG, Warner). The absent-minded head of the Academy, **George Gaynes**, is due for retirement but before heading off into the sunset accidentally switches bags with some diamond smugglers. The criminals swiftly kidnap Gaynes, and soon suffer the indignity of being pursued by some of the Academy's most incompetent graduates (better than *4*, but still not much cop – groan). Showing more originality, if not too much successful humour, is ***Dona Flor And Her Two Husbands*** (18, RCA/Columbia). Still, the dazzling **Sonia Braga** (*Kiss Of The Spider Woman*) is always worth watching.

A much bigger star, but only physically, features in ***The Incredible Hulk Returns*** (PG, New World Video). A US TV movie it arrives here on video with **Lou Ferrigno** as the Hulk, and **Bill Bixby** as his mild-mannered alter ego, David Banner. Apparently Banner has settled down at a scientific institute and is hopeful that his latest invention – the Gamma Ray Transponder – will cure him. Sadly the military are only interested in the device's potential as a weapon. Meanwhile a former student of Banner claims to be able to bring another Marvel Comics hero, The Mighty Thor, out of the past and into the present day . . .

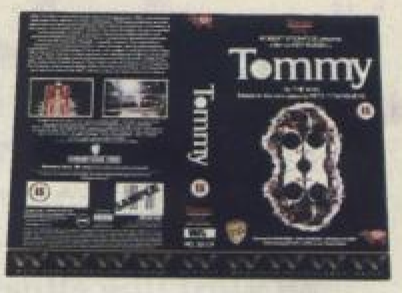
Heading up this month's ▶



collection of sell-through videos we have **Peter Weir**'s superb ***Witness*** (15, CIC Video). Starring **Harrison Ford** (*Raiders Of The Lost Ark*) and **Kelly McGillis** (*Top Gun*), it deals with cop Ford's efforts to protect the young Amish boy who witnessed a man's murder. Ford soon ends up taking refuge with the boy's mother, McGillis, in an anti-technology Amish community. The film picked up eight Oscar nominations and is beautiful to watch, with fine performances from all concerned. Another big-name star heads up ***The Eiger Sanction*** (15, CIC Video), unfortunately not even **Clint Eastwood** can save a script that tends toward unintentional self-parody. Both films are £9.99.

Where would Et Al be without **Warner Home Video**? The ***Fairy Tale Collection*** is their latest release and includes nine videos for £9.99 each. All of these were made as part of a series by the ill-fated Cannon group. The first of the films was ***Rumpelstiltskin*** starring **Amy Irving**. A musical adaption of the famous fairy tale, not even Irving can rescue a very average production. The other films are ***Sleeping Beauty*** starring **Morgan Fairchild** and **Tahnee Welch** (daughter of Raquel); ***Puss In Boots*** with **Jason Connery**; ***Beauty And The Beast*** starring **Rebecca De Mornay** (*Risky Business*) and unconnected with the ITV series; ***Hansel And Gretel*** featuring **David Warner**; ***Snow White And The Seven Dwarves*** featuring **Diana Rigg**; ***Red Riding Hood*** starring **Isabella Rossellini**; ***The Frog Prince***, and finally ***The Emperor's New Clothes***. As one would expect all of these films are rated U, with the exception of *Red Riding Hood* which is PG (shock!).

Fantasy of a distinctly different sort is on offer in ***Tommy*** (15, Warner Bros). The film version of **The Who**'s rock opera double album it stars **Roger Daltrey** as the Pinball Wizard of the World and Superstar Messiah. Also appearing are **Ann-Margaret**, **Elton John**, **Oliver Reed** and **Tina Turner**. At




£9.99 this should do very well indeed with rock fans.

But before we round off Et Al for this month, I must congratulate the BBC. Yes folks, only they would have the courage to show ***Beverly Hills Cop*** on regularised British TV. Sadly, though, somebody was working overtime in the cutting room. It must be the most altered movie to every appear on our virginal screens – it was even running a bit slower than the original version (or my video recorder was running faster!). The locker-room scene at the beginning was almost entirely dubbed; where did the shooting of Michael Tandino go, and the striptease bar scene was unrecognisable. They even changed a 'goddam' (whoops) to just plain 'damn' (that's better). Luckily you can get the original, unexpurgated, 15-rated version for only £9.99 from CIC.

# THE FORM

## CHARTS

**FAVOURITE GAME** ..................................................

**FAVOURITE MUSIC** .................................... **48K/128K**

**FAVOURITE VIDEO** ..................................................

Each month we compile three charts: top computer games, top computer music and top video films. So, why not take part in the most accurate way of finding out what everybody's playing – not just hype-filled sales charts! So get those entries in as soon as possible. Any ridiculously old games will not be dealt with favourably.

## SCORES

**GAME 1** ..................................................

..................................................

**GAME 2** ..................................................

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**GAME 3** ..................................................

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Next to each chart-topping game we also print a score to aim for. This score is calculated (very mathematically) with the aid of Phil King's computer. The person nearest to the target score of the month will get their name and score printed in the corresponding issue of CRASH. Now, it's impossible to cheat! (We hope . . . )

## THE INFO

Filled in the voting bit? Well, now all you have to do is fill in all the required information below, cut-out – or photocopy – your didactic (LMLWD) votes and send them to: **The Form, CRASH Towers, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB**.

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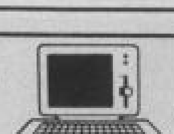
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PREVIEW

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# SPACE 1989

**This month sees the software houses drawing inspiration from Isaac Asimov's *Fantastic Voyage*, fairy tales, sci-fi space combat and good old mindless street violence. Here's hoping their gameplay's as promising as their scenarios.**

Originally written by **Stavros** 'wery good wideo game' **Fasoulas** (how's the National Service going, Stav?) and released on the C64, **Thalamus** now proudly present ***Sanxion - The Spectrum Remix***. An evil empire is intent on mankind's destruction and you're all that stands between it and Earth. While I pack my bags you can try and struggle through twelve levels of ferocious aliens, complete with detailed backgrounds and music by CRASH's master of the keyboard Jon Bates, what more could you want? Well, what Thalamus wants is £8.99 for a cassette and £12.99 for a +3 disk.

## *BLOOD LUST*

Bob Morlock is a computer programmer with problems: not only has he a serious cash flow situation but on a trip down the arcades he's met Charles Darwin (1809-1882). And if meeting someone who's been dead for 107 years isn't bad enough, according to Darwin the world's been invaded by aliens. Don't believe it? Well, just go and look at some of the arcade games. Bob is so worried by this revelation that he runs home to program a computer hero – based on his heroic self, of course – to save the day. Sadly, due to a glitch which plagues many inferior programmers, once he sets his computer program running he *becomes* his computer hero. This character is called Captain Blood and comes complete with a hyperdrive equipped spaceship.

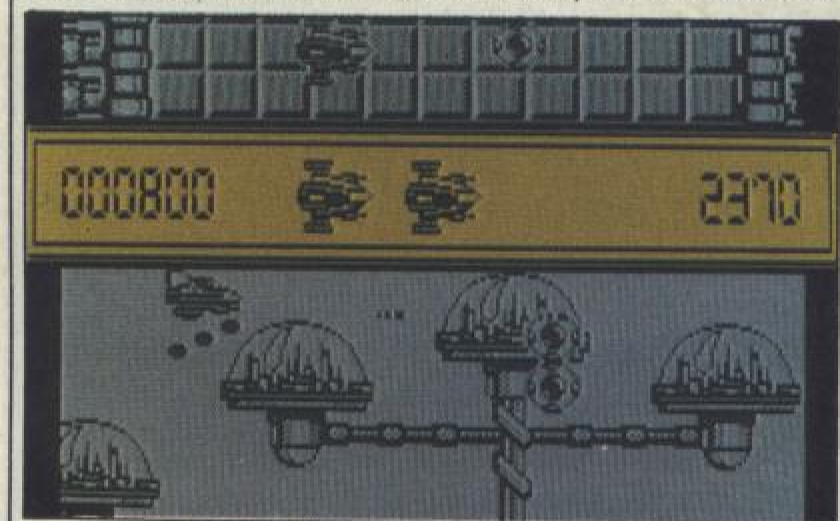


▲ ***Alien*-style cockpit controls in *Captain Blood***

No sooner than Blood realises what's happened than the ship comes under attack from aliens. Not feeling quite up to any heroic acts so soon, Blood orders his ship's bioconsciousness, called Honk, to warp them out of the area. This Honk does, but sadly a malfunction in the hyperdrive causes Blood to be cloned 30 times, with each clone taking part of his vital body fluids. So before Blood can do anything else, he must find them all and disintegrate them to restore his fluids. What a cock-up! Of course, astute readers have by now realised that this is obviously a French game. Called ***Captain Blood*** it will be available at £9.95/£14.95 from **Infogrames**. Fortunately for you this unusual arcade/adventure begins with just five clones left to go.

## *RAF'S FAIRIES*

Now one programmer you can expect never to make Morlock's common mistake is **Raffaele** *Cybernoid* **Cecco**. In the case of ***Stormlord***, however, he might be quite tempted to switch places with his hero. The scenario is that an evil queen has imprisoned a whole load of curvaceous fairies and is now threatening to kill them. Well Raf's hero, the Stormlord, isn't having any of that and sets out to rescue all these attractive young females. This isn't an easy task, however, keys and various other objects have to be col-

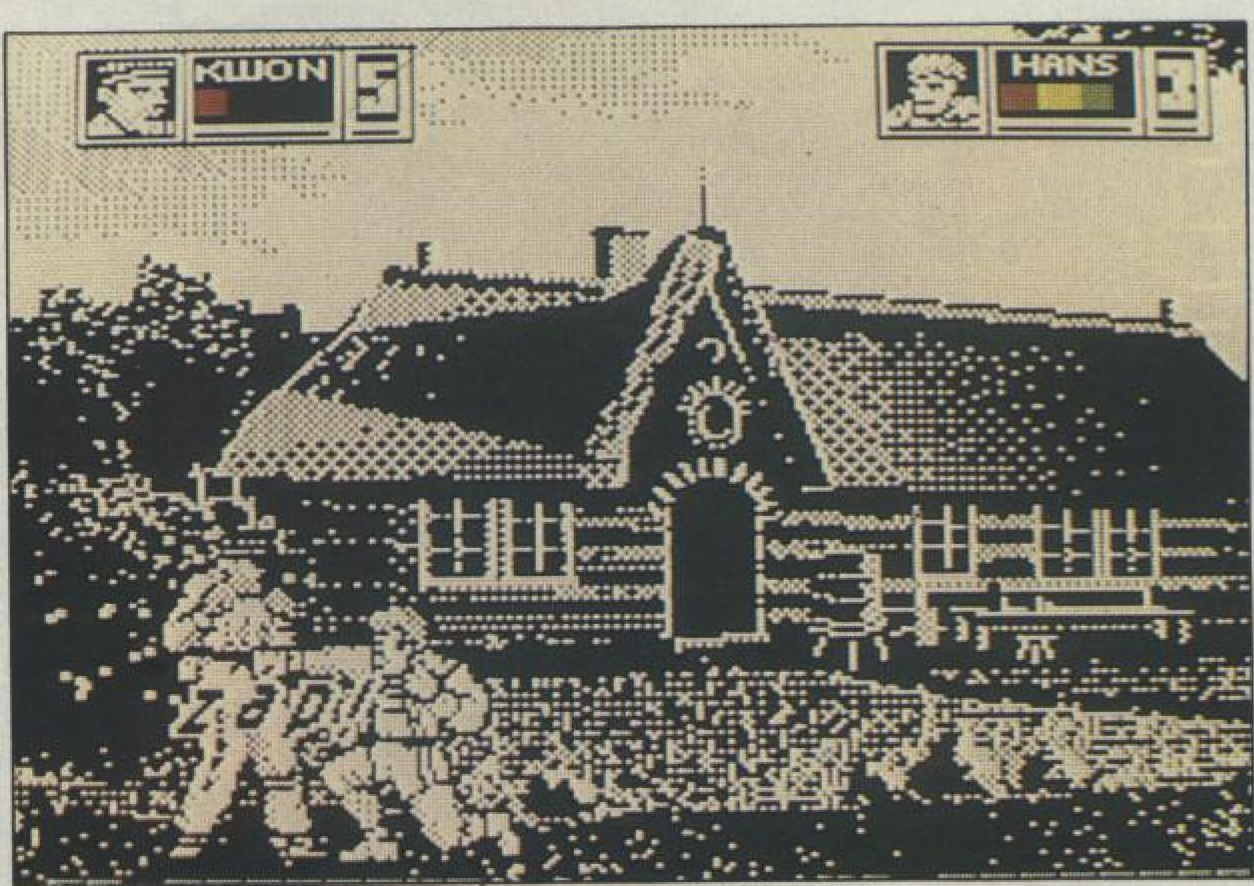


▲ **Sideways *and* overhead views in Thalamus's *Sanxion: The Spectrum Remix***

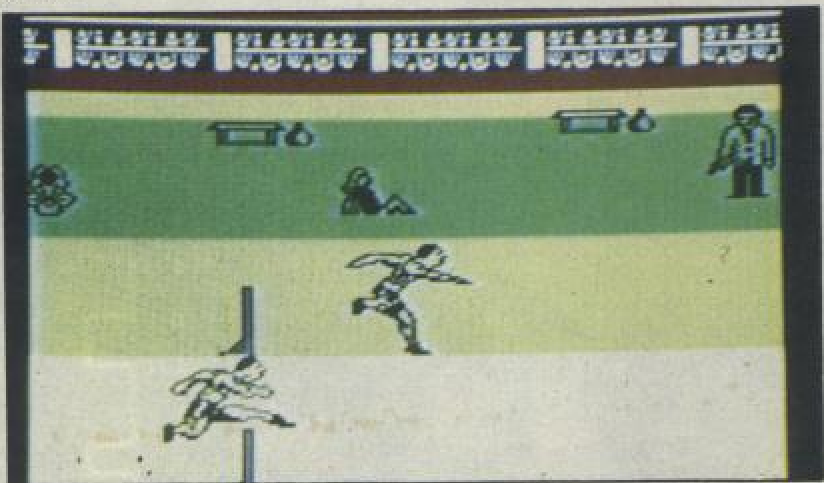

▲ **Hewson's *Eliminator* eases on down the cosmic highway**

lected, and the evil Queen's minions are everywhere. If you've read this month's Log by Raf then you'll know he brought a demo up to the Towers to show us. And on first impressions *Stormlord* looks excellent, with ultra-smooth scrolling, excellently detailed backgrounds and hardly any colour clash.

Another game due out from **Hewson** is the rather less whimsical ***Eliminator***. Here you play a psychopathic killer, roaring around the galaxy's planet s main roads, eliminating anything that moves (except yourself, of course). Along the way you should also keep an eye out for small pyramids and spheres floating above the road. Collect these to top up your fuel and add more powerful weapons. Fast reactions are needed as your shield energy is only restored at the end of the level. With graphics by **Steve Crow** (the author of *Wizard's Lair* and *Starquake*) this could rival *LED Storm* as 1989's top racing game.




▲ *Human Killing Machine* **(GO!) travels the world in search of Judith Chalmers**



▲ **Only a few hurdles to go before Epyx release** *Games: Summer Edition*

## ROUGH PLAY

**US Gold** have had a busy last few months, and to add to the long list of recent releases two new titles should soon be gracing the shelves of your local computer store. Namely these are ***Human Killing Machine***, and ***The Games: Summer Edition***. In *Human Killing Machine* (the follow up to *Street Fighter*) the brave player takes the part of Kwon, a martial arts expert who has to travel around the world facing some fierce competition in such exotic locations as Moscow, Beirut and Amsterdam. And in true *Street Fighter* tradition a pair of energy bars inform the combatants just how close they are to collapsing. Find out if you're made of the right stuff in February.

On the **Epyx** label comes the latest in sporting simulation games, following on the trail of *The Games: Winter Edition* and *Gold, Silver, Bronze* (Issues 56 and 57 respectively). *The Games: Summer Edition* takes you into the gruelling world of sports enthusiasts who lacking the snow to go skiing, ice skating and lugeing, and settle for sprint cycling, pole vaulting, spring board diving and archery. *The Games: Summer Edition* will be available at all good stockists from February.

## THE MAN WITH TWO BRAINS

Do you remember a movie called *Fantastic Voyage*? The one with Raquel Welch? (Thought that might jog a few memories.) It was based on a novel by Isaac Asimov where people were shrunk using modern technology and injected into someone's blood stream. Asimov has just written a sequel, as it happens, but I mention it only because it's a bit similar to **Cascade**'s latest; ***DNA Warrior***. Your mission is to guide your micro-submersible craft through the body of a scientist who has had a second brain implanted as an experiment. But things have gone disasterously wrong, and the erratic growth of the second brain has to be stopped before the life of a very valuable member of the scientific community is ended.

You will have to fight your way through the bodily defence systems, mutant brain tissue, and carefully pilot your way through several other major organs, before finally reaching and destroying the rogue brain. Can you avert disaster, find out in early February when *DNA Warrior* appears priced £9.95.

Well, that's it for this month. Only time to mention that **Activision** have just picked up the ***Who Framed Roger Rabbit*** film licence. Other computer owners will get the overseas programs, but on the Spectrum Activision are handcrafting one all by themselves. So watch out for more information about Eddy Valiant, Roger Rabbit, Baby Herman and many other Toontown characters soon!



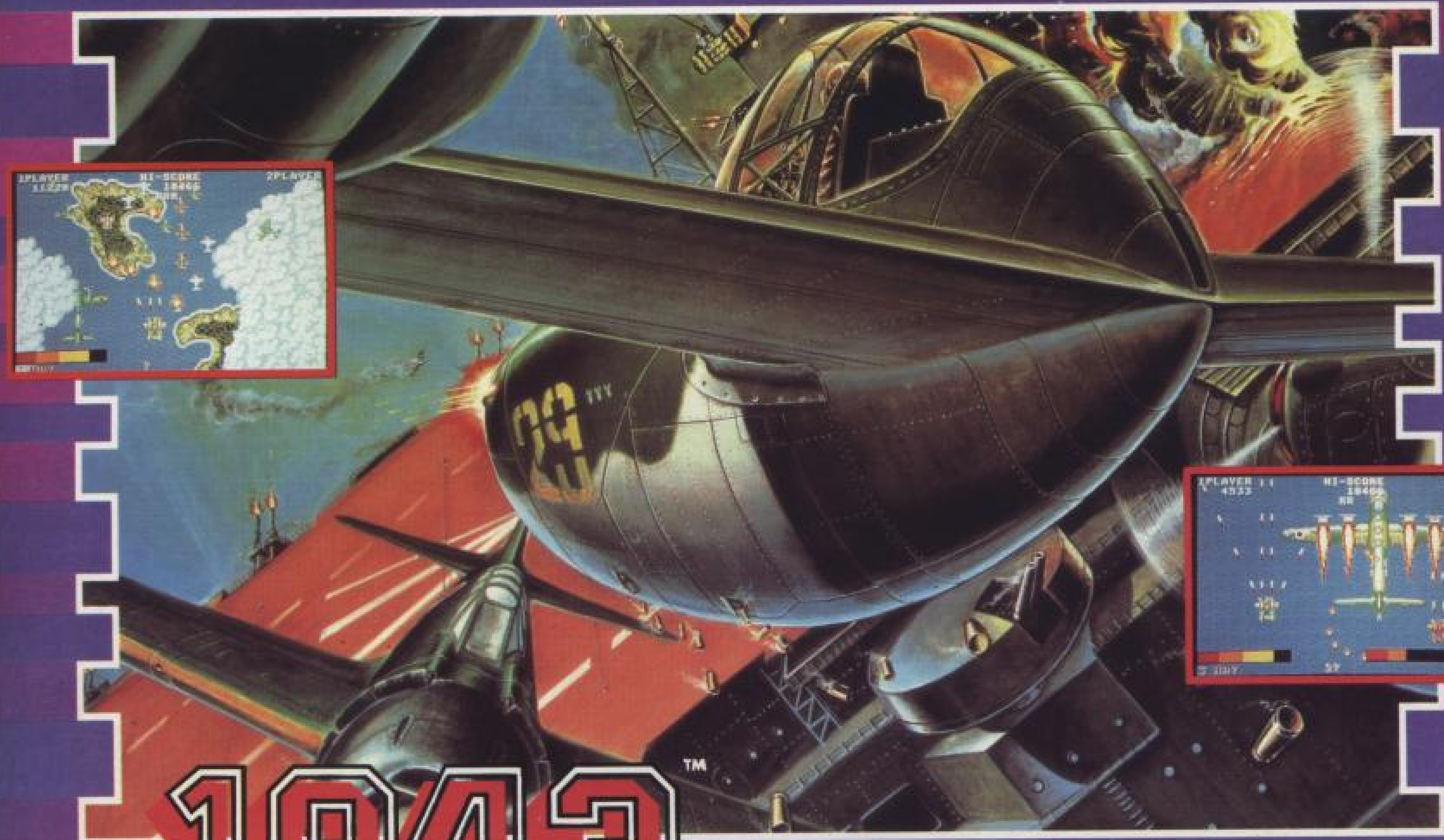
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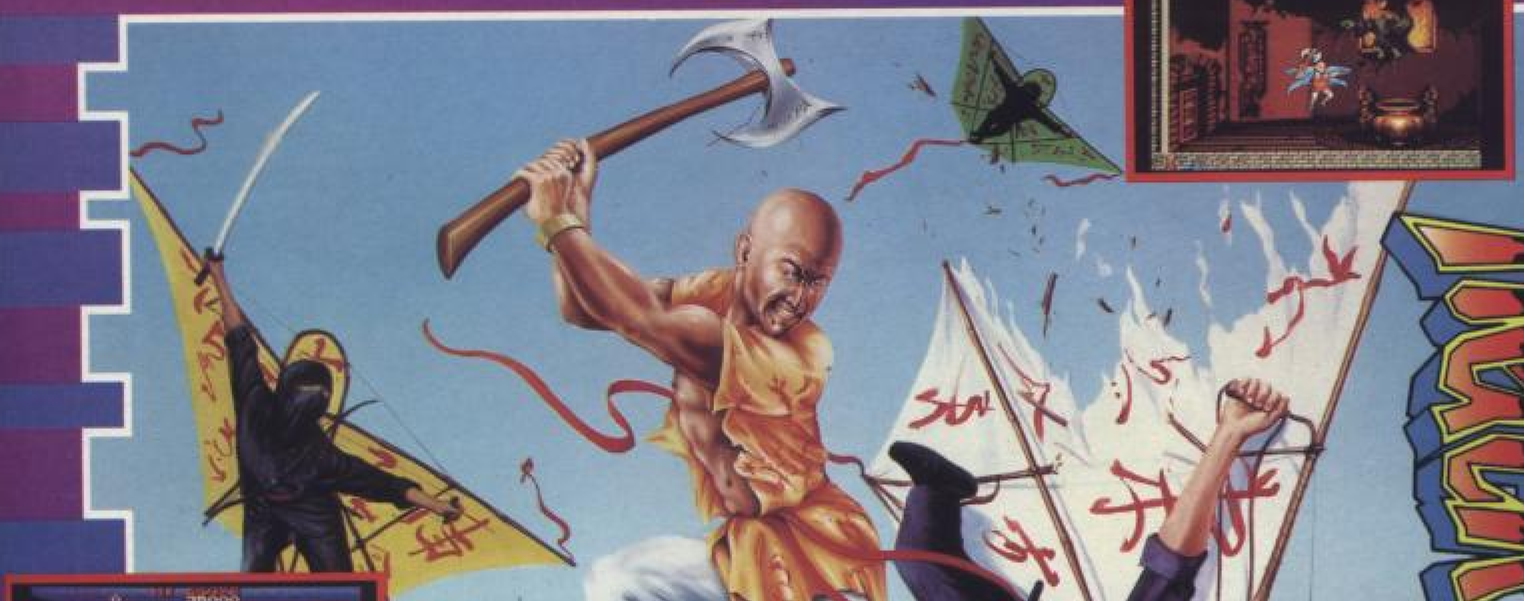
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# TIGER ROAD

Screen shots from various systems

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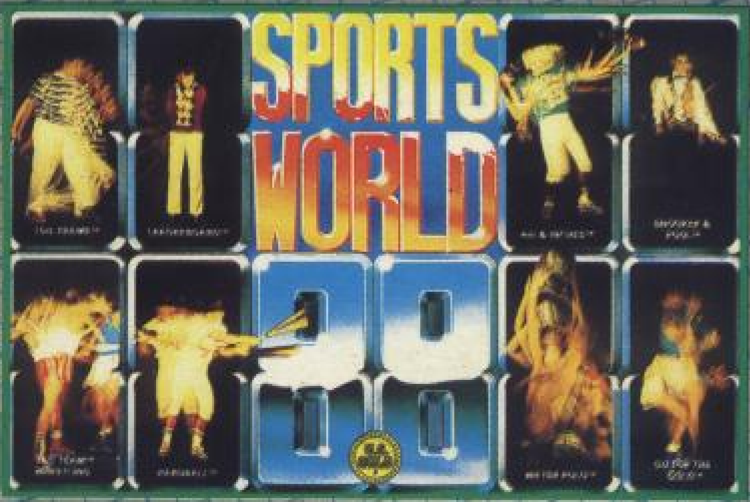

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